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NASHVILLE PUSSY

#59

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From the Editor

Rich Black

Hahahaha...

I'm delirious because I've been up for the better part of three days, gettin' this thing ready for the printer when not at my day job...wrapping up an issue still gives me a high. Extreme effort...no sleep...extreme effort...coming home to edit after working my day job... extreme effort...no sleep..making last minute adjustments that ultimately won't be enough... drop off to printer...aaahhhh....

Me go sleepy, but here's a word to brighten your day:

LOVE

WANNA SEND US AN INTERVIEW?

We're experimenting a bit here. *Under the Volcano* is looking for high-quality interviews to publish. We like many genres of music, but Punk Rock generally sets our loins on fire. Call or email us first about your interview ideas. We'll require hearing the band first of course, and have some simple guidelines (below) once you get the go-ahead. Remember, there are no guarantees -- we're kind of dicks about the right "mix" of bands for a particular issue, and hafta REALLY like what a band is doing to run a feature.

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

Please make the interview informative, interesting, and maybe even funny; questions like "What are your influences ?" are a NO NO! Allow the band's personality to shine through, and don't forget to mention the band's current release. Please follow the general Q&A format within these pages. Do NOT type in all captial letters, and please include an introductory paragraph that runsbetween 150-200 words. Interviews are to be send by EMAIL ONLY. Cut n' paste the interview into the body of the email, as we will not accept "attached files." Send tons of band photos and graphics, which will not be returned. Yeah, I know, all these rules...tough shit.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COLUMNS 4
48 IN THE BASEMENT 8
BREAKDOWN 10
DILLINGER FOUR 12
EQUAL VISION RECORDS 18
NASHVILLE PUSSY 22
LOWER CLASS BRATS 26
Sounds From the Drwoning Pool 30
AUDIO REVIEWS 38
SPORT'S PAGE 60
CLASSIFIEDS 62

Columns

MODEL CITIZEN

GREG GROOVY

Over Columbus Day I managed to come face to face with James Hetfield. It occurred at this newly designed park on Mission St. that Sony apparently paid for. While there's probably the obvious argument about gentrification of the city and what not, I can't help but notice the whole Bauhaus-sequel architecture and the ultra modernist design is something you would normally have to travel to Europe to see.

The rest rooms made me feel like an analog man in a digital world. The toilets flush themselves, and the sinks sense when your hands are underneath the faucets and sprinkle water on them, until you move them away. The rest room does everything but wipe your ass.

The main reason yours truly was on Mission St. was to check out the Where The Wild Things Are attraction, an interactive walk through amusement obviously based on the book. If you never read the thing as a child, well, you were gypped. If you're too hawd and are pretending to forget you've read the book, well, than you're just a jackass. (Excuse the bitter tone, I'm growing more and more weary of these high maintenance facades that are just so fucking ridiculous to keep up). I know, I know, I know you were hawd kaw since you were four and how dare I question ya' pawide.

Anyway, Hetfield is letting is daughter run around the park area outside of the Metreon (geesh it even sounds French, but thankfully the place didn't smell like a Parisian!) and my niece is playing in the park as well. I'm standing almost elbow to elbow with Het, as my niece starts chasing his daughter. James yells, "Kelly say hi!" and he seems somewhat nice. I make a head nod toward him, and I notice by his body language he looks disturbed. He didn't want to be bothered, which is okay with me. Since I'm not, never have been, never will be a Metallica fan. His status is irrelevant to me, though I guess that's the way the world works. Everyone becomes a fan, in the face of a star. Ridiculous. I should've forced my Mom to approach him and tell him "I listen to your *S&M* CD while I vacuum every morning!!" One more reason to support NAPSTER!!

Later on in the afternoon, I see James Brady sitting and having lunch with some fat chick. Here's a guy who makes a living these days by writing shitty little 500 word columns for the Sunday inserts. There's someone who'd probably have something interesting to say, or at least have some advice on how to turn your bullshit into cash wads....Which I guess might shatter the belief that some of you have, that we here at *UTV* get paid for our work. We don't! So breath easy, Rich isn't forking over big bucks for all those hair bag and metal reviewers. If you noticed the influx of utterly ridiculous and vague reviews in this mag, you're not alone. They forced me out of retirement!

Never Mind The Ballots

I had a co-worker try to pick my brain to see who I voted for. Which, if you know Groovy, isn't bright. So I left him with this, "It doesn't matter who you vote for, because the corporations that dictate the laws of the land are still calling the shots. If things really change on Election Day, you'd see Wall St. stop! Greenspan's financial forecasts have a greater effect on this nation than Election Day! " His response, "Uhh... I have to disagree with you?" So I ask for further explanation. His reply "Uh...I just do!" SMART!

A wise man from the band Litmus Green once said to me "If voting could change the system, it would be illegal." Which is true. Especially if you look at this nation's history of movements that led to bonafide social change; they did not occur within the card-carrying rank and file. The aristocrats moved in favor of these ideas not because they were sympathetic, but because they knew it would only be time before they fell like the Bastille!

Doctorate In Unemployment

Shawn Clap

"A Bar is Only as Good as its Jukebox." A wise older lady once told me that.

As far as I'm concerned, truer words have never been spoken.

It doesn't matter if you're a punk or a mod or a skin, one thing is for certain: The Rolling Stones are the best band you could possibly play on a bar's jukebox. Any respectable drinking hole will at least have their greatest hits and places that cater to a more refined and sophisticated taste may even boast *December's Children* and *Beggar's Banquet* on their jukebox.

There are some rare places that have great jukes. There is a place in Woodside, Queens, in fact, right around the corner from where Gary Keogh of Jones Crusher was stabbed, that has a "to die for" jukebox with nothing but The Pogues, The Clash and The Smiths. But places like that are few and far between.

There are, of course, distinct differences between spinning records in the comfort of your own home and selecting songs in a bar's jukebox. Aside from the obvious (like you probably don't piss in a vomit encrusted urinal at home), there are more subtle, intricate differences. Mainly the "Other people are listening too" factor. You know, people who regularly frequent bars. Lunch Pail Johnnys and Pizza Shop Tonys. You don't want to play anything too annoying, as to avoid quizzical stares and the occasional confrontations that are sure to arise when some drunken stranger realizes that it was, in fact, you who played that entire B-52's album.

There are only a handful of recording artists who never become annoying, no matter how intoxicated the locals become: The Rolling Stones, Johnny Cash and Social Distortion (only because the bulk of their songs are either covers or rip-offs of the Stones or Cash).

Another main detail to be considered is the "Unemployment only pays $405 a week" factor. So while you are getting you drink on, you must be frugal with your musical selections. Two dollars for five songs means no B-sides, no live, nor acoustic versions. Just strait forward booze down the hatch Rock n' Roll.

The lady, whose quote is at the beginning, was a woman I was seeing when I lived in San Francisco. She was a bartender in this great artsy dump called the Tip Top Inn, conveniently located across from the Unemployment Office on Mission St. I was 20 and she was 30. So, I spent most of my time trying to fill the generation gap, if you know what I mean. Although the jukebox at her bar was great, she'd often insist that we walk 12 blocks across town to this other bar, only because their jukebox had the Johnny and Santo timeless classic "Sleepwalk." It's the sad, slow and bitter-sweet song played after the plane crash in the movie *La Bamba*. There were no other reasons to visit that bar, other than that single selection on the jukebox.

Granted, bars are often dank and depressing. Eleven times out of ten you won't meet anyone worth talking to sober. But if you are into chasing your blues away on an uncomfortable stool, there are only three names to remember. Hank Williams, Patsy Cline and Johnny Walker. When taken in the correct amounts, your troubles won't go away, they just won't concern you anymore. But too much of any one part and things can go terribly wrong. This is what's known as honky tonk overload.

This one time, when I was alone, driving a van packed full with all my earthly possessions from California to New York, I found myself on the outskirts of Oklahoma City late one Friday night. I pulled the rental van into a motel parking lot for a "stretch my legs" break. The motel's parking lot was shared with the parking lot of a little honky tonk bar. I was too tired to continue driving, but much too alive to go to sleep.

As I was taking a walk around the parking lot I saw a Chevy Nova, driven by a fairly attractive woman, pull into a parking space on the honky tonk part of the lot. It wasn't really the woman driving the car that caught my attention, it was the infant car seat in the back. The seat was empty and the protective harness was in the full upright position. The woman was a healthy looking, corn-fed Midwesterner. She flicked her midnight cigarette into the gutter without breaking stride as she entered the bar. This mother meant business.

There was nothing memorable about the inside of the bar. In fact, it was so unremarkable that I can't even describe the general layout. But I can remember one thing, as I walked in, on the jukebox, Johnny Cash "Ring of Fire."

The goings on were typical of what you would find in any bar, anywhere. Awkward flirtations and mind numbing idle chatter. Guys trying to get girls by acting tougher than all the rest. Rites of passage. Heated verbal disputes over the rules of pool. The bartender with the top couple of buttons on her blouse undone, hoping that a brief glimpse of cleavage will result in an increase of tips. And a decrease in phone calls from that god damned bill collector. Any bar, anywhere.

The fairly attractive woman, the one with the baby seat, drank long neck Buds at the far end of the bar. It was barely visible in the low lighting, but I saw it. A scar. A pink four inch scar running diagonally down her neck. Who knew? Perhaps she got caught in the twisted metal and glass crossfire when the shit hit the fan at the Federal Building a few years earlier. That, of course, is just purely speculation.

Another thing I happened to notice, in the low lighting, was when she nonchalantly removed the wedding band from her ring finger and casually slipped it into the front pocket of her dungarees. Did she tell her husband that she would be visiting her mother in Tulsa? And not to wait up. Again, purely speculation.

Some knowledgeable patron played three straight Rolling Stones songs. Wild horse wouldn't have been able to drag me away from that bar. The baby seat woman was chatting it up with what appeared to be the winner of a Roy Orbison look a like contest. Within no time, he produced a small vial, half full with little yellow pills. Without hesitation, the ringless, fairly attractive, baby seat woman took a couple of those pills and washed it all down with a healthy swig of beer. She looked at her new best friend with wild, far away eyes.

The song on the juke box: Rolling Stones "Mother's Little Helper."

Did anyone else even notice? Did anyone else even care? It was one of the most horribly beautiful moments that I have ever witnessed. Endless vacuum of debauchery. I reflected for a moment and the tune changed. It was Patsy Cline "Walking after Midnight." Seemed like some sound advice.

A bar may only be as good as it's jukebox, but, a man is only as smart as he is quick to realize when he has seen too much.

Sidenote:
In an ideal world, me and my band THE CLAP, would share a couple of pitchers of beer while the jukebox plays these songs, in this order.
Showcase Showdown "Pool of Condemnation"
The Explosion "No Revolution Anymore"
Rolling Stones "Street Fighting Man"
Iggy Pop "Lust for Life"
Rolling Stones "Jumping Jack Flash"
Oi Polloi "Boot Down the Door"
Desperosity "Power Ballad"
Rolling Stones "Shattered"
The Smiths "Shoplifters of the World Unite"
Johnny Cash "Folsom Prison Blues"
Hank Williams "Long Gone"
Johnny and Santo "Sleepwalk"
Patsy Cline "Walking after Midnight"

w .fuckoff.com
Mr. Noiz

I was in a restaurant last night up here in Rochester, and one of the bills I got back in my change had H2O lyrics written on it. The thing that I liked about it was the “XXX Forever” also written on the bill. It just reminded me of watching people “Lose the Edge” or listening to Straight Edge bands that aren't even Straight Edge. One of the most infamous instances of this was the song “Drug Free Youth” by The Abused (notably a regular Gorilla Biscuits cover) who wrote the song on ACID!

Here's something else to bring you back a few yearsaswell.. www.btinternet.com/~thisispunkrock/fliers/gigflier.htm. This site has a bunch of show flyers from way back before there were computers (in everyday life) and when cut and paste meant scissors and glue/tape. I think I had attended about four of the 75 shows listed here. It's fun to see flyers for shows like Suicidal Tendencies and Agnostic Front at the Ritz.

Back to the present, check out www.atomjack.com, (with a Drive Like Jehu reference) where you can find a shoutcast broadcast which focuses (but not limited to) on the San Diego music scene. I think he's got a playlist of 1600+ songs. This site is up most of the time, but you might get him on a bad day. Or you can check out www.shoutcast.com and find a ton of shoutcasts, which, by the way, is streaming audio using winamp (www.winamp.com). Another good shoutcast can be found at www.solublesound.com. Well, that's it for now, and if the world doesn't blow up before the end of this year, fuck you for next year.

COACH'S CORNER
N "COACH" PAGDON

The Beast Has Been Declawed or We Never Meant To Hurt Anyone

It was a typical on-the-threshold-of-30 male get together. Hockey graced the 30 inch TV screen, a pizza box-its contents devoured-lay defeated on the coffee table. A dozen empty beer cans littered the room, and loud drunken insults and bellows of laughter flew freely in the warm, close air smelling of sweat and alcohol. The only thing that distinguished this scene from any other congregation of American males on a Friday night was the soundtrack. There was a conspicuous absence of modern rock hits by Third Eye Blind or Collective Soul. No retro Led Zeppelin or Pink Floyd blared. Instead, obscure compilations of early '80s West Coast Punk bands spun on the turntable. Mystic Records was the featured label--Dr. Know, Ill Repute, Battalion of Saints and others roared and reeled as the conversation shifted back and forth between girls and sports and cars and then again in reverse order. A subtle difference--or is it?
The hockey game ended and a video was put in the VCR. *Another State of Mind*, the classic tour documentary of Youth Brigade and Social Distortion from 1982 flickered on the screen. The conversation suddenly changed from cliched male speak to the wistful and dreary talk of the "good old days." Foolish sentimentality and nostalgia for lost youth took over and tales of Punk Rock glory days were traded like old fishermen swapping sea sagas at a harbor tavern.

Homes, mortgages, children, and marriage have taken the place of leather jackets, green liberty spikes, and fistfights. Changes came faster than could be expected. One turns around and can only barely glimpse their younger self disappearing behind them. But I never intended to write about this. It is only a footnote in the history book that will be written regarding the late twentieth century phenomenon known as Punk Rock.

Someday, an art history professor from an urban university will write a comprehensive three volume history of Punk Rock. It will follow the "decline and fall" model of historical literature, in the tradition of Spengler. We live in the last days. The end times. Production on this book could begin at any moment.

The threat is over. The once radical is now mainstream. There has been a transvaluation of all values. The visual shock of the pierced tongue, the turquoise hair, the dirty word on the clothing is now part of the everyday. Overexposure to the marginal has blown open the doors of perception of the once narrow-minded. Perhaps the movement has succeeded--and therefore rendered itself obsolete, like an appendage become vestigial. Has the war been won or lost? The aim was to destroy--to tear down, to erase. Remove the values that drove our parents and their parents and fight the evil "isms" and phobias--racism, sexism, imperialism, and homophobia. And slowly, it's beginning to appear as if the battle is being won. Everyday new laws are being passed safeguarding the new "isms"--multiculturalism and feminism. Consciousness is raising across the board as progress is made in the awareness of a myriad of societal ills. The mainstream of old is now becoming the marginal. The champions of the Old Empire are becoming the outcasts of the new one. If you wanted to shock and dismay the general populace in 1982, you walked into a family restaurant wearing a "God is Dead" T shirt. If you want to shock and dismay the general populace in the year 2000, you walk into a restaurant wearing a "God Is Pro-Life" T shirt. Times have indeed changed. Parents now accompany their children to events which 20 years ago caused dozens of police to show up in riot gear by virtue of its very organization. The Beast Has Been Declawed. The same neighborhoods we were scared to death to walk through to get to a show are now safer than they have ever been. The battles are being won. Or are they?

What is the next mutation on the evolutionary chain? Who will be the next "punks" to be reviled, shunned by the general public? And how long will it be until they have their turn at the throne? Are we happy with our victory? The old evils are still around, sure, but they may not last much longer. Do I sound convinced of what I write? What am I really saying here? Whose side am I on, anyway? Da youth aren't getting restless anymore. There's really no need to. Everyone has what they need. Perfect convenience. Perfect amusement. Perfect harmony. Perfect unity. There's no need to smash that bottle, son. There's no need to take all those drugs, young lady. You've won. Turn in your weapons and return to your jobs. The good guys have proven victorious.

Maybe Ian Mackaye really does work for the CIA. Didn't a lot of those early DC Hardcore guys who founded the Straight Edge movement have fathers active in Washington politics? US Intelligence infiltrated the radical revolutionary groups of the '60s, why not Punk Rock? Of course, I'm only kidding. No one would dare think that the Straight Edge movement was a conservative backlash against a violent leftist attempt to destroy the structure of the society. That would be ridiculous.

But take all that as an aside. I just want to know what will happen when we have everything we wanted. When the last objective is accomplished, will there be any enemies left? Who will they be? Perhaps we need look no further than ourselves.

CLASS WAR
Kevin 1887anok

DIY and its Potentialities.

Instead of commenting this issue on the sham of the election that is before us, or the one year anniversary of the Seattle demonstrations, or the death of the left in the United States, or even the pitiful state of the scene I have decided to touch on a subject that has come up in conversation quite a bit lately, and therefore focus on the positive. What I am referring to is: Do It Yourself (DIY) community. Where is it going? What is its potential? Can and should it be better organized and more democratic? And can revolutionary and directly democratic ideas be beneficial to the DIY community? These are the questions I will attempt to answer briefly, with the hope that this will lead to further discussion.

DIY Community: Before discussing the potential of the DIY community it would be appropriate to define exactly what we are talking about. The DIY community is a set of institutions and mechanisms that attempt to create a set of social relationships that lie outside the mainstream. A counter-set, you can say. Counter to the dominant paradigm of hierarchical and centralized, profit-oriented, non-participatory, professionalized, and ethically-devoid institutions that make up mainstream culture and society. DIY is a form of resistance to these structures. While the participants may or may not be aware of their antagonist position, they do understand the importance of its existence. Here I have defined what it is against, now lets discuss where it came from. DIY arose within the Punk scene (and similar ways arose in the Rave, Hip Hop and Rap cultures) to fulfill the need that individuals have for social relationships and participation in their environment. In mainstream society the individual does not have too many opportunities for participation.

The model of the factory: where workers perform simple, repetitive tasks and have little or no say in the implementation or assigning of these tasks; has expanded so that society is now a 'social factory." From school and college, to the church and family, to the state and capital and every social relationship, the model of the factory is present. This is of course true for culture as well. Without too much analysis we can see how this applies to the stadium concert phenomena and the 'MTV generation." But DIY is much more than the simple demand for the individuals right to participate in society. DIY is a collective demand, a demand for the collective right to make the political, social, economic and in this case cultural decisions that effect the individual and the community. This is the revolutionary aspect of DIY, for the demand for collective rights is a revolutionary demand and this illuminates us to the anarchist principals and origins of DIY. What do we believe? DIY is above all a set of beliefs, an ethical and political philosophy that is played out in practice rather than in college text books and the minds of academics. It is a methodology, 'a method of acting." This is expressed through the activities of the DIY community. Zines, record labels, distros, bands, shows and other events, and local scenes are all institutions of this community. And these institutions are governed by rules that are quite different from that of the mainstream institutions that they counter. Mutual aid, solidarity, cooperation, participatory decision making, face to face contact, uncompromising to imposed morality and authority, and real community are only some of the tenets of this belief system. Giving up these beliefs for the profit or ideals of mainstream society is selling out, the high heresy of DIY. I am purposely being vague in order not to impose my analysis on DIY beliefs on the reader, rather a confirmation of these beliefs must arise out of internal dialogue with-in the DIY community.

Crisis of the DIY community: At present there is a definite crisis in the DIY community on Long Island, this is not only my opinion but the opinion of many individuals that I have had the opportunity to speak to. From the centralization of power to the lack of 'rank and file" involvement, the scene seems to be breaking down. This should not be looked at as a negative, but rather the possibility of creating a stronger and more democratic scene.

The idea(s) of Direct Democracy: The philosophy of direct democracy is very in tune with that of DIY. Direct democracy, which is derived out of anarchism and social ecology, is a reconstructive vision or a post-revolutionary blueprint for the 'new society." But unlike a utopian or authoritarian vision, direct democracy is a set of potentialities and experimental institutions. For instance, all of life, all institutions would be organized from the bottom-up, by the people themselves. This recognition of the ability of individuals to organize their own affairs in collective institutions is identical to that of DIY, in both arrangements there is no hierarchy, no master or boss. Direct democracy proposes that we shouldn't have to wait for a better world, that we can collectively organize a more democratic society here and now. A food cooperative is a great example of this, showing that a community can take control over the distribution of food. Rather than shop at a grocery store owned by a multinational corporation that sell processed foods shipped from around the world. Communities have organized to buy local produce and run (as a group of people would run a show) the store themselves. I will not continue in explaining how a food coop functions, there is plenty of literature and information available online if one wishes to explore this subject further. (www.cooperative.org)

Alternative media outlets such as newspapers and zines, cable access shows, pirate radio, and now the web-based independent media centers (www.indiemedia.org) are all examples of institutions that are collectively run for the benefit of the community. This is also key with the centralization of our media outlets. If the majority of our sources of information are owned by multi-national corporations, can we expect that this information is going to be unbiased? Is ABC which is owned by Disney, going to report on Disney's sweatshops in the third world fairly -- if they mention the subject at all? Well, obviously not. These alternative media institutions give the power of the sources of information back to the people and allow for a real, functioning democracy of ideas.

Similarly, schools and institutions of higher education serve certain interests. And I don't have to tell readers of *UTV* how our present education system not only doesn't educate but actually beats the desire of learning out of the student. To counter this, alternative educational institutions have been set up to offer educational opportunities that meet individual's desires. From home schooling to college (see Institution of Social Ecology at www.tao.ca/~ise/) these institutions offer different methods of teaching and the possibilities to learn about issues never covered in 'traditional" schools. Many activist and community groups regularly host forums and discussions or support a study group were individuals have the opportunity to learn different skills and ideas. From simple car repair to understanding the global economy skills exchange programs, and the learning/teaching process can be quite powerful.

Positive institutions take these ideas we have outlined to another level. By organizing cooperatively run institutions such as food co-ops, worker-owned businesses, free health clinics, alternative schools, community gardens, collective housing arrangements, community supported agriculture projects (where consumers work directly with an organic farmer), and infoshops and community centers, the community is being born. These institutions alone will not reorganize political, social, economic, and cultural power into the hands of the citizens, but they do two vital things: first it creates an environment where individuals gain practice in organizing cooperatively and non-hierarchally, and second it creates an community of sociability, humanizing the individual participants.

Direct democracy proposes that the community members themselves should directly organize the community, but this must be done in an organized fashion. The proposal is that local communities can organize in popular, face-to-face assemblies, and then network with other communities, through rotating representatives. In this arrangement we de-professionalize politics and allow everyone to participate in all aspects of decision-making and carrying out these decisions. These community-wide meetings might discuss transportation issues or what should be done with communal land, but decision-making power would be limited to coordinating different community institutions and deciding community-wide issues. Many proponents of direct democracy (see Social Ecologist thinker Murray Bookchin) propose that community assemblies should be created here and now and begin to challenge the hegemony of the state and capitalism.

And all of what we just discussed can be applied to DIY community.

Potentialities and Multiplicity: We must remember that the above proposed direct democracy is just an example of one of the many possibilities in the creation of a more cooperative society. Instead of limiting ourselves to one philosophy or idea we can being to explore and experiment with a multiplicity of possibilities. In a sense, we must find our way into the future.

The potentialities of DIY community: Bringing the ideas of direct democracy and multiplicity into DIY is an extremely exciting proposal. Within the DIY community we have the opportunity to experiment with different institutions and ways of organizing. There is no reason why the DIY community should not have its own organic vegan / vegetarian food cooperative, pirate radio station or collectively run silk screening business. Also many of the problems now facing the DIY scene can be overcome by creating a popular assembly and involving more individuals in the running of the scene. Limiting Straight Edge to a 'life style, not a trend," is not sufficient. Why aren't Straight Edge kids and bands supporting AA programs for their peers or creating peer counseling programs for those who have drug and alcohol addictions? If having shows at clubs and bars is constantly a problem, then why haven't we begun to raise funds for our own multi-use space where we can have shows, maybe house a worker-run cafe or cooperative book and zine shop with alternative education programs and forums? The potentialities for the DIY community are almost endless. And this article is meant to further discussion on this issue.

Practice and the DIY Flea Market: Beginning this process is very key and the Modern Times Collective is proposing this in the form of 'every other month" DIY Flea Markets which will take place at the Ethical Humanist Building in Garden City (38 Old Country Rd) on the following dates: December 16th, February 17th, and April 21st. All of them are on a Saturday, and all go from 6PM to 11PM. At these events there will be workshops, potlucks, forums, art shows, tabling by individuals, distros and projects, and eventually meetings and community assemblies. For more info or to get involved: www.aao.net or 516.616.3151.

I am hoping that discussion on these issues continue and projects such as the ones I outlined here are organized; for further discussion feel free to email me at ba_kin@hotmail.com.

Keep informed: Long Island Radical Newspaper, *Modern Times*, second issue out in mid-December. Send $1 for sample, $7-10 for subscription to **POB 7152, Garden City, NY 11530**.

LIP

Keith Thomson

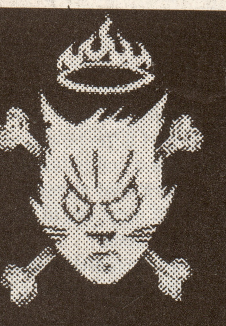
My Secret Plan to Become King of The United States!

It was John F. Kennedy who turned the presidency into a cult of personality, growing up within royal walls, yet hangin' out with gangsters and courting Hollywood dolls, letting the public address him familiarly, letting us call him Jack, gracing our magazines and television screens with his handsomeness. He is the precedent to which all young, buff politicians are compared. Ronald Reagan also capitalized on the advent of mass media, using his professional on camera and oratory experience, his glistening hair and pearly smile. He was a Hollywood actor playing the role of president, and was convincing! The whole world bought it! Bill Clinton wired into the younger teledrones, making it hip to be square and became a president playing the role of Hollywood star, (it was just disturbing to see Clinton playing himself in the very forgettable movie *Contact*). His comparison to Kennedy was fueled when a photo surfaced of a graduate gown adorned Bill, shaking hands with his prototype. With all of this immediate access to information and a short attention span because of it, isn't it the next logical step that the presidency become a cult of television personality? Aren't the uneducated masses all ready voting for whom they would most like to play a doctor on their favorite nighttime serial?

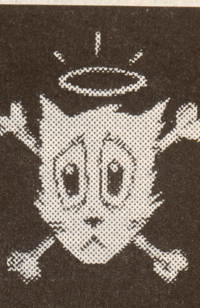
I first need a quick an inexpensive way to get into the public consciousness, to cause a stir that would get media attention. I could send a memo to the president of my workplace and claim sexual harassment by a superior, get called in by the presiding board (surely to consist mainly or wholly of men), and threaten suit if action was not taken against the accused. The board is certain to consider me a sissy and will ask me to reconsider. I, of course, will be obnoxiously adamant. The board will then ask me to resign on the spot, but I won't so they'll have to fire me, leaving themselves open for an immediate lawsuit, or will placate me for the moment, allowing me to resume my duties while they "consider the situation." I will note our meeting and in my calendar ledger, next to a photocopy of the sent memo. The second scenario plays my hand stronger because it would give the ill will time to fester and boil beneath the surface. I will institute a repertoire of bad employee habits; Coming in late, leaving early, calling in sick, poor hygiene, foul language, constantly talking on my cell phone, disrespect to fellow employees and the accused. I will eventually be fired and will then mount a lawsuit claiming sexual harassment. I'll form the mascula-sensitivo society, write a charter based on the principles of equal representation in society for all sissy men. I'll call the local newspapers and television stations, causing it to become morning radio chatter. I'll go out to Hollywood and do human-interest stories for both *People* and *US* magazines. I'll do advertisements for internet companies, get bit parts on Fox shows, start hangin' out with liberal Hollywood types in trendy clubs, date young TV starlets, show up in *Who's Who* as "and friend," boff Buffy the vampire slayer, boast about it on Howard Stern, but then, at my height, get arrested with a prostitute while on a hotel room drug binge, go on probation (six times), disclose all my disturbing sexual obsessions on Court TV, do a short stint in prison after being caught on a motel video smoking crack with Marion Barry, Monica Lewinsky and a transsexual mule named Steve. In prison I'll find god and write a memoir admonishing my past sins, claim devotion to Jery Falwell's ministry and manipulate a petition signed by his entire congregation for my release. I'll then do my *People* magazine "Clean and Sober" issue, become active in the Falwell administration, having my picture taken with Jerry every chance I get, broadcast my own moralistic television show, serve in local office, then serve as governor of a right-wing mid-western state, lay the necessary bribes to win Senate Majority (or minority) Leader, placate the entire populous by doping the water supply with soma, dissolve the two party system, creating one, the "God's Favoured" party. And then, and only then, will I accept the accolades of my adoring public and let rest the crown that they will place on my head!

But ssshhhh....It's a secret!

PUNK ROCK FROM LONG ISLAND , NY



48 IN THE BASEMENT



BY LUKE

I've been wanting to interview 48 in the Basement for a while, and finally got the chance on Halloween. They are the reigning kings of Pop Punk on Long Island, and have built up a following over the last four years. The band combines the sounds of Screeching Weasel and The Queers with an oldies feel, for songs about relationships, girls and the sort. Their new CD, ***Hurry Up and Wait****, is a co-release with The BackUp Plan, on Refried Records. Vocalist Mike Ulser and lead guitarist Paul Lamo answered my questions.* ***-Luke***

Under the Volcano: How did you come up with your name?
Mike Ulser: We fucked 48 chicks in a basement once. Nah, just kidding. We used to practice in our ex-drummer's basement, and his address was 48.
UTV: How long have you been together, and how long do you think you'll be a band for?
Mike Ulser: We've been together for four-and-a-half years. We'll be together as long as we can keep making music and having fun... and tolerate each other.
UTV: What were some of the goals you had when forming the band?
Mike Ulser: First, our goal was to play instruments loud.
Paul Lamo: Then once we accomplished that, we wanted to get a good recording of our songs and put out a CD. Now we want to get picked up by a bigger, independent label, and play more off Long Island.
Mike Ulser: Oh yeah... we also want to get chicks.
UTV: How as adding a second guitarist [Dan Nerves], changed the band?
Paul Lamo: The songs sound fuller and it fills out our sound better. Paul can sing backup vocals more, etc.
UTV: What's the worst thing about being in a punk band from Long Island?
Mike Ulser: Long Island does not have enough places to play.
Paul Lamo: Some shows are good, some suck.
UTV: Who are your influences?
Mike Ulser: Screeching Weasel, Green Day, Face to Face, Weezer, The Queers, Ramones, Bouncing Souls, Wu-Tang Clan, Ol' Dirty Bastard, Fozzy, and oldies.
UTV: How does the new split CD with The BackUp Plan differ from your last split CD with The Microwave Orphans?
Paul Lamo: Well, there are different songs on it. The recording is a lot better.
Mike Ulser: It's on Refried Records, not Eiffel Trousers.
Paul Lamo: The BackUp Plan is a lot different from The Microwave Orphans. The first CD was a learning experience for us; this time around we knew what we were doing.
UTV: Do you feel a split CD is more cost effective?
Paul Lamo: Absolutely. It cuts the cost in half. It makes it easier to sell, also.
UTV: Have you been writing new songs? What are your plans for your next release?
Paul Lamo: We have four new songs right now. We want to put out a 7". We want to re-record all the songs on our split CDs and have a bigger indie label get it distributed nationally.
UTV: Do you plan to tour anytime soon?
Mike Ulser: We have some upcoming shows in Connecticut. We would like to play New Jersey. Hopefully we will do an east coast tour during the summer of 2001.
UTV: If you could interview any band, who would it be?
Mike Ulser: Weezer.
UTV: How did the *Slacker TV* theme song come to be?
Mike Ulser: Pete [Sick Boy] asked Paul to write a theme song for his public access TV show.
Paul Lamo: All he told us is to include the words, "old people" and "socks" in the song. You can catch *Slacker TV* in Nassau County on Channel 71 at

10:30PM Wednesday nights. In Suffolk check out Channel 70 at 11PM. If you want copies of episodes go to www.theslackpack.com.

UTV: You are known to cover oldies' songs in your live set. Do you ever plan to record any of them?

Paul Lamo: We would like to do a 7" with four oldies covers and make the 7" look like an old 45rpm or something.

UTV: The new CD is entitled, *Hurry Up and Wait*. Are you a fan of oxymorons?

Paul Lamo: Nah, we just thought it was a cool title.

UTV: Both of your CDs have cool artwork. Do you feel that it's an important factor that kids take into consideration when buying CDs?

Paul Lamo: People have said to me that they bought our CD because they liked the artwork and then they liked the band too. CD artwork might make someone buy it if they're not sure about the band. If you want to contact the guy who did our stuff, email him: angelo@48inthebasement.com.

UTV: Where's your favorite place to play?

Mike Ulser: Ground Zero and Commack Bowl on Long Island.

UTV: What's the funniest thing that's happened to you guys on the road?

Paul Lamo: Mike got drunk the night before we were playing a show in Ohio. He had puke stains all over himself. The car broke down on the way there, and he wakes up and had no idea where the fuck he was. After that incident he garnered the nickname, "Mike Crotchvomit."

Mike Ulser: One time we were playing a show with The BackUp Plan, and we were sharing drummers. We decided to do a split set. One band would play a song, then the other band would. It was crazy, and all the equipment broke after that show.

UTV: What are some of the differences between your label now, Refried Records and your old label, Eiffel Trousers?

Paul Lamo: Eiffel Trousers were our friends. They used to pay for the duplication of our first demo tape, so it was natural to do our first CD on their label. Refried has helped with promotion and getting out of state shows, etc.

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BREAKDOWN

BY HARRY

They have been around forever and you just can't get rid of them -- and who would want to? Breakdown have been delivering bulletproof traditional Hardcore for over a decade, and with their new release, *Battle Hymns For An Angry Planet*, they show no signs of letting up on their assault. The band has not been without volatility over the years, however; line-up changes have interfered and plagued the band since early on.

"Most of the time when someone left or was forced to leave the band it was amicable," singer/lyricist Jeff Perlin explains. "There weren't any hard feelings. That's a really good thing. One thing it did for Breakdown -- having so many different members -- was that the music never sounded the same record after record. I mean, if you hear our stuff you know it's Breakdown -- we have a certain style -- but the songs don't all have the same type of riffing going on, the same song structures, etc. Having different musicians contribute over the years kept the music interesting. I don't think I'd still be doing it if we sounded the same as when we started. That would be too boring."

Within the last few years Breakdown's line-up has stabilized with AJ Novello (formerly of Leeway and Both Worlds) playing second guitar, and Perlin is revelling in the results.

"This is probably the tightest record we've put out because the line-up has been steady for years now," he says. "[Mike] Dijan's songwriting abilities keep improving, and I think on this record it's leaps and bounds ahead of anything he's done before."

Stylistically, *Battle Hymns...* brings more to the table than just traditional Hardcore, while simultaneously remaining true to that foundation.

"Dijon tried to write songs with more traditional song structures to make them more memorable; not just a bunch of different parts thrown together," Jeff explains. "Every part of each song melds into the next part smoothly; it makes more sense. And AJ and I tried to influence Dijon with some different types of music -- stuff he hadn't heard before."

Being entrenched in Hardcore and youthful in spirit could not delay the inevitability of growing up for Jeff and the rest of the band. When Breakdown first began, its members were likely to be in a state of rebellion against their parents; ten years later, most are parents themselves.

"I guess we take life more seriously

now," Jeff says. "We have more shit to be pissed off about. I mean, when you get older you see things more clearly. You've had to deal with real-world shit day after day. So the lyrics and the feeling of the songs mean a lot more. Not to say it's not tough as hell to be young and deal with everyday life, but now we've REALLY been put through the shitter, and have a lot more to be pissed off about. I mean, when you have kids, you really start to get pissed off about what's going on in the world, because now you aren't only looking out for yourself, you're looking out for yours."

Jeff further explained that part of "looking out for yours" entails paying more attention to what's going on in the world. This sensibility helped prompt Jeff to confront issues from a global perspective lyrically on the new record. Jeff elaborated with his specific intentions.

"The main thing I tried to concentrate on with these lyrics was the fact that the citizens of any country have to put up with whatever decisions are made by their government, whether they believe in them or not... How governments can make decisions that can be life or death issues. I mean, what kind of say do kids have when bombs are dropping all around them? They don't understand what is going on. It's about power trips; it's about the lack of concern for the same people that put these leaders into power. The masses don't have any control over their destinies. The people need to rise up and not take any shit from their oppressors."

Relationships -- whether friendly or a romantic --have always prompted heartfelt songs of desire, heartache, disillusionment, and love, sometimes all at once. Jeff was candid about how his music has come to be an outlet to sing about his marital trials.

"Relationships give you stuff to work with; my wife and I have been having a lot of problems getting along, and now we are separated. The song `Can't Figure You Out' is about that -- how our relationship went down the tubes. Sometimes you can create something good out of a bad experience."

When asked about the band's blue collar background, Jeff recalled a story about a fellow drywaller he used to work with.

"I worked for this one guy, Jerry Oxendein, doing drywall for a while," Jeff recounts. "This guy was the nastiest person I ever met. This guy used to put up a piece of drywall, take a shit next to it, and then put up the other wall... Meaning that these people would move into these brand new houses that they paid big bucks for and have Jerry Oxendein's shit permanently between the walls. He'd also take spare pieces of drywall and wipe his ass with them. The guy had like two teeth, dribbling all the time, and you couldn't understand a word he said. Because not only did the guy have summer teeth (summer here, summer there), but he had this strong hick accent I couldn't understand either. So he would yell down to me something like `Jesh, ge muh da mer.' I would be like `What?'....`Jesh, ge muh da mer! Whadduyu desh?' I would have the other hicks translate for me... `Jeff, get me the hammer.' Geez, learn how to fucking talk!"

Although Jeff now has an office job, he's done stints as a mason tender and as a house painter, in addition to drywalling; Perlin is also very aware that the band's blue-collar background is vital to their art.

"We can have songs about how tough everyday life is and be justified about it," Jeff says. "A lot of bands write about how hard life is and they are living with mommy, and not doing anything except smoking weed and going to band practice."

Regardless of your history of run-ins with shady, toothless hicks who harbor maniacal and twisted bathroom habits, listening to Breakdown should become one of your priorities. *Battle Hymns For An Angry Planet* is out now on Thorp Records and will make your ears happy. If you happen to catch them live, don't hesitate to pull Jeff aside, conjure up your most impressive hick voice, and ask how Jerry Oxendein is doing.

DILLINGER FOUR

BY CRAIG

Dillinger Four is one of the most relevant bands in the punk scene today, embodying the ugliness and fun that is missing so much from the polished pretty boy "Punk" that comes out most of the time, while also writing incredibly witty lyrics that always make you think about things. Their new album on Hopeless, ***Versus God*** *rips straight through. This interview was conducted outside of Wetlands in September.***-Craig**

Under the Volcano: Who's in the band, and how long have you been around?

St. Patrick: Well, right now it's me on bass and vocals, Erik on guitar and vocals, Billy on guitar and vocals, and Monkey Hustle plays drums. That's pretty much been the line-up anybody would know, except for the first 7" where we were just a three piece. Then, right after that, a fellow named Sloan was in the band for about three months. We've been around since I guess '94.

UTV: D4 shares a label with the Nobodys. You're a pretty political band, and the Nobodys have a habit of objectifying women on their records and whatnot. I was curious if you have a problem with that or find any hypocrisy in that, and or in being on a label that doesn't have a problem promoting that sort of thing.

St. Patrick: No, because I find hypocrisy with people who talk shit about Hopeless for putting out their records, and talking shit about the Nobodys but don't show up to their shows to let them know what they think. However, I'm proud of the fact that we, personally, have met the Nobodys, and we've said this in interviews before: We're not down with what they do, they know that. But we've also met them on a personal level, and they're actually not all together terrible guys. However, they know we're not big fans of their band, or how they go about their business. Hopeless also knows that we make fun of it. The fact of the matter is, originally *This Shit Is Genius* -- we had talked about doing that on Hopeless and it was going to be called *Great Man Tits* and there was going to be a close-up with me with a tank top on and Dillinger Four written in crayon across my chest. But I'm glad you brought that up because there's that *Maximum RockNRoll* interview with Sub City, and the fact of the matter is Louis is doing a phenomenal fucking thing with Sub City. But three quarters of the interview is someone getting scene brownie points tearing him up because he let the Nobodys do half of a split... **UTV:** With the Beautys...

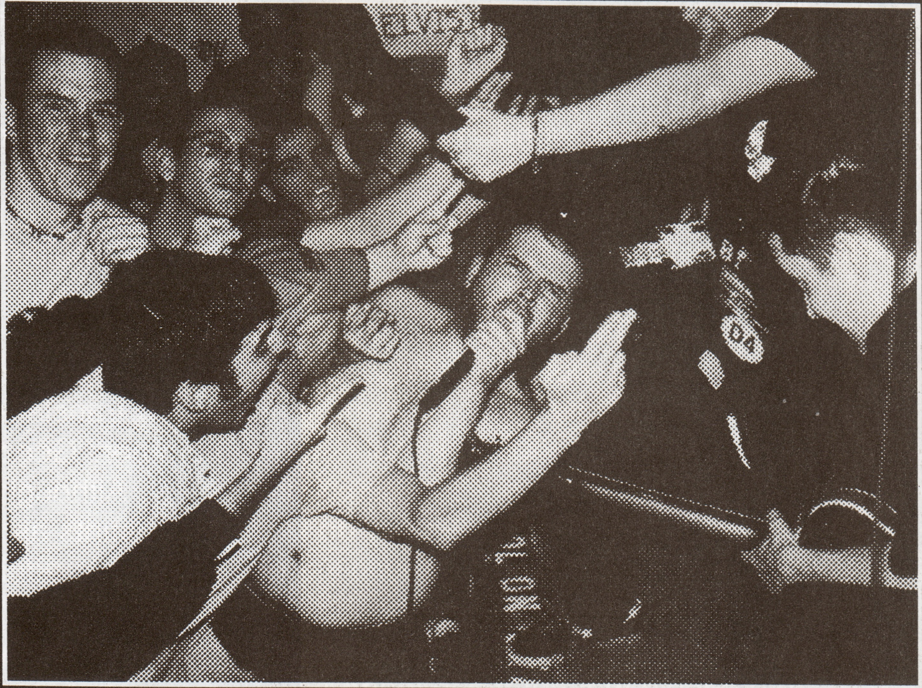
St. Patrick: Right, which I found really ironic because they're attacking him because he's putting out records by a band that is sexist; however that band -- being the Nobodys -- chose that band to do a split with, being the Beautys who have a singer/songwriter who's a woman.

UTV: But a band can still be sexist. Just because they did a split with a band with a woman in it doesn't mean that they're not sexist.

Erik: I agree with you on that, but I mean, I read porn. You can look at it as objectification of women... well, I shouldn't say I read porn, I look at porn. I'm not a porn guy, we all know porn guys who have like loads of it in their closets...

UTV: And mullets...

Erik: I don't even own porn, but when I come across it, it doesn't offend me. Like what Patty was saying; the Nobodys, they do their thing, we do our thing. I'm not scared of what people say in records. We say what we want to say in records, and I'd like to think it goes against maybe some of those things those other bands put out there. If Louis wants to put out records by someone then it's Louis' business, and he likes to put records out by us and that's our business... that's between us and that's not about what else he's doing. Now, of course the logical thing that might be asked right here is, "What if he put out a white power band, would you still be on the label?" Because it's sort of ranking levels of what's okay to do wrong...



UTV: Well, you can get away with sexism in the punk culture...

Erik: Right, but you can't get away with racism. And obviously, yeah, that's a sticky thing. You know I can't imagine a label that we..., I can't thing of one that I don't have problems with something. I can't think of one. I like to think we do what we do, and I like to think we put stuff out there that's good, and I think we put out stuff that we've thought out. We could put out our own records, that's really the only option.

St. Patrick: I think you also have to look at the bigger picture, being, how does Hopeless and Sub City work what they do? Sometimes I almost wish Louis Hopeless himself could go on a tour and just hang around and meet people, because he's not some opportunist moneyhound guy. A lot of people talk about, "You know the punk scene today..." and... "this is objectifying women" and whatnot, I think there are a lot of things that are a lot more offensive than what the Nobodys are doing right now that pass, and it's acceptable. The funny thing is years ago we just realized... there are bands that we are personally friends with from our own home town that we go on tour with, and people are upset that we're friends with them for whatever reason. We do what we do, and we endorse what we endorse, and as far as I know we've never done a 'Date Rape Is Rad' 7", you know? There's an example; if the Nobodys put out a "Date Rape Is Rad" 7", we would probably leave Hopeless over it. That's such a weird thing, and it's just come up recently. It's kind of funny because there's been a couple people who have asked us about that, but I don't know why they're asking us. I don't know why they're asking **us** and not Fifteen...

UTV: Well, I'd assume they'd ask Jeff Ott as well...

Erik: Jeff Ott's also a confessed rapist. It's a hard question to answer. You can get wrapped up inside that question and go over it for years. It's the same question as like, "Oh, so you're vegan? How can you possibly know that there's no animal products in everything from the rubber that's used in things..." You probably know vegans like we do. And you know that every vegan has to say, "This is what I'm capable of doing that's good." And no one lives a pure life and that's reality. Nobodys do things that I think are kind of offensive, but like Patty was saying, I don't think we've ever necessarily endorsed the Nobodys. But at the same time, I wouldn't leave the label...

St. Patrick: I'll just say here what I've said before, which is: I've met JJ Nobody... I've also told him that his band doesn't do anything for me, but I think he's a nice enough guy. And I think if a lot of people have a problem with him they should go and tell him. I'm also very offended by Ska, but we didn't **not** go on the label because Mustard Plug is on it; who are also, very nice guys.

UTV: Erik, you run a bar. And there is something to say that alcohol -- like any other drug in society -- can keep people pacified and not questioning things. Running a bar, I think, does a little more than promote that.

Erik: I'm also a licensed tobacco dealer...

UTV: I was kind of curious where you find consistency. If you're against an apathetic attitude and not really questioning anything -- which I get from reading your lyrics -- how does that tie in with running a bar? How you find that consistent? It's easy for a punk kid to be drinking a 40 ounce and say 'Smash the state' at the same time, without really doing anything. I was curious what you think of alcoholism in the punk scene, and how that ties in with what you're doing?

Erik: I think it's really easy to drink a soy shake and say the same thing. I'm about people's ability to make choices for themselves. I'm about the idea that I think people are capable of making their own decisions. I think that advertising and marketing can do wicked things to people, but not on an individual basis. I think as far as groups, yeah, it is a fact that there is liquors and things that are marketed towards specific groups of people. That's how marketing works, that's why it's marketing, it's about finding an audience. I guess to some extent I'm part of that; so is anybody who sells products in a retail way. Honestly, and this is my opinion: I believe that in the society we live in, entrepreneurship is the closest thing to any kind of freedom that people can get. Now, it takes money; it **does** take money. It takes a way to get money, I know that. But entrepreneurship is the one thing that is available to people. I've been part of entrepreneurial projects that were collectives, and now I'm part of a entrepreneurial project that is not a collective; it's me and two partners that are doing it to make a living. I think that people in our particular town... I benefit off my place -- and maybe this is being naive -- but I think other people do too. And it's not about alcoholism, I think it's about a meeting space for people of like minds. I could be selling coffee, I could be selling alcohol; there were a lot of cafe's, there was no place selling alcohol. I think it's providing... and I never get this lofty about it, I'm not going to be like "I'm doing everyone a favor." I just put a place out there that I wanted to go to, but I think meeting spaces for people of like minds are important in that throughout history, cafe's and pubs have the meeting places, cafe's and pubs have been the bastions of free speech, of people getting together and being able to freely associate. I'm 100% at peace with what I do and how I do it.

UTV: I know that most of you guys aren't vegetarians or vegans. And you could say that animal rights is a very class-based argument, where certain people can afford to be vegetarian and certain people can afford to be vegan. You tend to come from a more working class point of view, and I think that punk comes from a sort of working class point of view. I was curious of where you think animal rights lies in the punk scene, because it kind of **is** a class exclusive thing.

Erik: I disagree with that. I think that only certain people can afford to be vegan and drink like Imagine products, like Rice Dream and things like that. But there's plenty of cultures that are vegetarian or vegan that aren't out there eating Harvest burgers and drinking soy milk. If you wanna have a purely western or American diet and want to be vegan, yeah, that's kind of expensive because if you want a hamburger, yeah, it's going to cost you more to have someone make you a vegetarian hamburger. But, you have people from other countries that have more of a vegetarian staple in their diet... they moved here, they live here, they eat the same foods. They're not out there buying Rice Dream... I think that's a funny way to look at it. I don't think it's classist.

St. Patrick: Yeah, I don't think it's classist either. I think sometimes with the hypocrisy certain people kick, it can be kind of classist. You know, your trust fund kid at a liberal arts college living off of things like Rice Dream and Harvest Burgers and he's the first person to jump in somebody's face, yeah I think that's pretty classist. I don't think veganism is a class issue. I think traditionally the people I've known that have been vegan, and did it well, and still are make time to cook. And are interested in cooking and making different things...

UTV: But if you're talking a mother with three kids to feed and she's working two jobs...

St. Patrick: Well, if she's into cooking and passionate about veganism she could probably figure things out. However, you do get into weird things though because there's also dieticians that say children shouldn't be vegan. I'm not even one to speak because it's not an especially big issue with me.

Erik: There are entire countries where the kids are vegan, and they grow up fine unless there's other socioeconomic issues that might cause them poverty. I'm the one in the band who has maintained some degree of limitation on my diet, although now, almost half my life, it comes down to what I said before: I'm just about people's personal choices. I'm not really interested in what other people eat. **UTV:** I guess I've just never found a way to maintain a healthy vegan diet cheaply...

Erik: Well, it's time or money. It takes either to prepare those meals -- which it **would** for a family of four -- and people don't have time because they have to work to make money, which is the point you're saying, or it's just straight up money. Because it is probably cheaper to feed a family of four from McDonald's then it is to prepare a good vegan meal when you factor in the time it takes; the time away from work, and the time you spend preparing that meal. But once again, the question was more focused toward the punk scene. And as far as the punk scene goes, for the most part we're not talking about a single mother with three kids...

St. Patrick: If we're talking about the punk scene these days, we're not even talking about a working class thing to be honest with you.

Erik: Once again, I just support people making their own decisions. I think that as long as information's out there, you know?

St. Patrick: I know you and I [to Erik] have talked about it and we don't like extremes on either side. I cannot stand the fucking vegan that rushes into peoples faces to give them shit about their diet. But on the other hand, I fucking can't stand the people that go out of their way to eat the White Castle in the vegan's face.

Erik: Or the person who refuses a free meal because they're like "I want Burger King."

St. Patrick: I'll go on record saying that Natural Peanut Butter, there just is no reason for it. I fucking hate Natural Peanut Butter. I think it's disgusting, and it's not food, and it pisses me off when someone will say like, "Yeah, we'll hook you up with dinner after the show," I welcome that at any time, they could probably give me their grandmother's diarrhea and I'd be down with it. But Natural Peanut Butter is worse than grandma's diarrhea.

Erik: Ultimately, we're fucking heathens man. We do what we want to do. I mean, we think about these things a lot, but we practice what we are comfortable with. We're adults. We're about trying to be happy and not harm people if that's what we can do.

St. Patrick: We've actually talked about this before too [to Erik]. There was a period of time where Erik and I were really into Straight Edge Hardcore and whatnot, like ten years ago.

UTV: Wasn't one of you in a Victory Records band?

St. Patrick: Yeah, Erik was. But vegetarianism was a really huge movement, let's say. There wereall these people going vegetarian, but theweird thing is they started dropping like flies because it was never really in their heart, it was never something they were really passionate about. It was just something that was big at the time. So the weird thing is there were all these tens of thousands of teenagers and young people in general into vegetarianism and veganism at one point. Even though that added momentum to the movement, I think it degraded it a couple years later because they all started dropping like flies. Then you have even more jokes of people who are like, "Well, I used to be vegetarian but fuck that," you know what I mean? The way I look at things like vegetarianism and veganism, is they're almost like protests. They should be for the people who genuinely, in their heart of hearts, this is something they're almost doing, not without effort, because obviously it's going to take effort no matter what. But don't fake the funk. I hate it when I see people bullied into movements that they don't think is really part of them. Because they're going to end up dropping it somewhere along the lines, and that's even worse than if they had never gotten into it in the first place.

UTV: Well, people are always seeming to look for some trend to go along with...

St. Patrick: Well, I don't think everyone does it necessarily to be trendy. Not necessarily to be trendy. You don't know... I'm talking about me as well. I mean, I've done this before too, everyone has. It's pretty weird because you're talking about it being a pretty big thing in the punk scene right now, but it's been a pretty big thing the punk scene for 20 years.

UTV: Next question: There's this growing trend of bands that seem to come from the DIY scene and use the DIY ethic as a stepping stone, bands that don't really seem to have any rebellious context to them. They just want to go up there and look pretty and have all the 14 year old girls yell at them and say "I love you" and whatever. I was curious how you think the DIY ethic applies these days...

St. Patrick: Well, I think first of all you need to establish where that came from. I think that came from specifically the early '90s. People who got into -- not even into Punk Rock specifically -- but got into underground music because of bands like Sonic Youth or Nirvana, and then the Offspring and then Green Day after that. People that got into underground music and viewed it like, "Well, there's this underground and this is where I can kick it for a couple years, cut my jeans, take some cool pictures of me looking shitty hanging out on street corners. I'll have street cred and some really cool fliers of weird obscure shows and people will kick themselves because they missed them. And then eventually I'll be on MTV and it'll make me look even better", yo u know like, "I'll do what the Sex Pistols never quite pulled off," that kind of shit. That's what I think is the most annoying thing. I hate it when I get into a debate about DIY with somebody and what they're thinking is DIY, really doesn't date back to anything because they're not bringing up any examples... usually they bring up Fugazi because that's the easiest "I read every *Spin* magazine" example. I just can't stand the mentality of like "You must adhere to these rules or else I'll pound you over the fucking head with these fucking rules." The same people that are that adamant are the same people you see two years later in a New York Dolls T-shirt and a straw up their nose, sitting back stage being like "Man, remember those days?". And it's like, yeah, I remember those days... I also remember those days ten years before I ever met you.

Erik: When you get into specifics about it, with Dillinger Four and back with the older bands that I was in, I've been part of very few DIY records.

St. Patrick: That's the funny thing... we've never put out a DIY record.

Erik: We were never the ones trying to sit and glue and silkscreen our own records.

St. Patrick: Well, actually...

Erik: Okay, well we **have** done that. But not as Dillinger Four. It's not like Dillinger Four put out the records, but we've helped put them together.

St. Patrick: It's just really weird because it's the kind of thing where... you have bands that are like, "We assembled our own records and we were up for three weeks straight silk screening these Kleenex's to put on the covers." But, that also might be the band who makes you only get $20 for the show because they had to get $900. It's kind of weird, and I think there are a lot of factors that I don't think a lot of people who aren't in bands even know about. A lot of people sometimes look at the packaging of records and think like "This band's down." But they don't even know these people, and they don't really know why they're doing it specifically.

Erik: You can tell when you're with people who sort of come from the same community as you. Sometimes a bigger paper or something like that will interview us and be like, "What's punk? What's **that** all about?" and it comes down to where I say, "I know it when I see it." I think that's what most people do. Most people who are in it, know it when they see it. DIY and punk for some of us are almost synonymous...

St. Patrick: Holy shit, it's fucking Greg Kinear! [a man walks by the van]

UTV: It's probably not Greg Kinear...

St. Patrick: No, it **is**. I just saw him. He walked by right over here...

Erik: Anyway. People say, "What's DIY and what's punk?" and I say, "I know it when I'm around it." I know it when I'm in it, and I know it when I'm standing around people who are a part of it.

St. Patrick: The thing that's going on right now is the hangover of the DIY drunk that was the 90's. DIY became a witch hunt in the '90s. And inevitably what's going to happen, is what you're going to have is a lot of people... and some of them are people who I was talking about earlier. People who got into things via Gr*nge, who I think are kind of think are mostly jackasses anyway. But a lot of them are also people that who eventually wanted to get out of that scene because they were like, "I'm trying to do something, I'm trying to make a difference and someone is finding a loophole in what I do." Like, "I'm doing my own records, but since I have a barcode I'm bad." Inevitably, you have that witchhunt, and the jurors are all together, and they've decided you're a witch because you have a barcode. It's not going to take very long before you're like, 'You know what? Fuck you. Because I've been playing shows and people are into this and like what I'm down with." And inevitably you get ostracized and people will get further out there. That's only like half the people we're talking about. There's another half of people who are just opportunists. They're the carpetbaggers of the millennium. It is going on and it is for real, and we've met people who are like this. Who are like behind closed doors they want to kind of laugh because a mohawk kid showed up to the show in Cleveland. To us that's just kind of like, "Wow, that's really weird." The thing is, I feel bad sometimes because we make a lot of jokes about Emo onstage. The funny thing is, Jason from the Promise Ring is an old friend of ours. We love Jason, he's a great guy. But a lot of times we kind of end up making fun of people who are kind of like him. But usually those people who are trying to **be** him. They're the people who are like, "We'll be the Promise Ring of Los Angeles for a few years, and then we can be the Promise Ring of MTV because the Promise Ring aren't the Promise Ring of MTV." I don't even know who Blink 182 are trying to be, but there's gotta be at least three bands from LA who are broken up now that they're trying to be.

UTV: The weird thing about what's termed "Emo" now is that it's not what was termed "Emo" earlier in the 90's, like Ebullition type stuff..

St. Patrick: That's a given. It's just weird because you have Emo of the mid-80's like Rites of Spring and Embrace, and a little bit after that with like Soul Side and maybe Swiz if you really wanna stretch the boundaries. But a little bit after that you end up with things like Heroin and all the Gravity bands. And then somehow a couple years later you have all the Superchunk/Wedding Present bands and somehow they're Emo. I've never completely understood...I think it comes back to Cap N' Jazz, because they were very much a legitimately... well, not necessarily DIY band, because I'm not sure they did the records themselves, but very much a playing in the basement with a couple Hardcore bands band. They were not stylish looking kids, they might have been anorexic but they weren't the most styling-looking kids you ever saw. But they were very into what they were doing, and they could get their freak out on it. But it just took a couple years for people to take that, clean it up a little bit, use the same octave chords and the same approach and then cash in on it. That's what's going on. The thing that I love is that what are called Emo bands now, they're all supposedly a reaction to Pop Punk, but the weird thing is that even when Pop Punk was called the scourge of the scene, it still remained the one kind of music that kids could do. You just start a band that might not have been very good, but it was there. The funny thing to me is that most Emo bands use the term "punk" a lot more than most what I would call "punk" bands. Because...to Emo bands it's a selling point. It's like, "We're **not** a pop band. We're not trying to be, we're punk!" Meanwhile, they're all in their Gap outfits with brand new equipment...

UTV: It's a weird thing because I don't think there's any sort of rebellion. It's about being pretty and singing bad songs about getting dumped by your pretty girlfriend. It's just like, "Shut up..."

St. Patrick: Right. But you know you get into a tricky thing with that as well. The flipside to that is that a lot of what is Emo now could also be rooted back to Television, which almost dates back to the Ramones, and that wasn't the most rebellious shit, you know? It's a hard call to make. I think most of it boils down to whether someone's a jackass or they're not, and the way I look at it is that if someone's an opportunist and they just take advantage of an underground, to eventually blow up, and they specifically lie while they're doing what they're doing, that's a fucking jackass and fuck them.

UTV: I've heard a story you guys tell about some guy in Chicago yelling about suburban kids, or something like that...

St. Patrick: Oh, the "suburban bitches"...

Erik: He's come to every other show since. And he always comes and says, "I'm the guy..." and apologizes. Patty actually dealt with him more that night. But it was one of those things where he wasn't very careful about his choice of words.

St. Patrick: He swears up and down that he was being sarcastic, which I still don't think he was being that night. But the ironic thing is that he's been a decent guy ever since.

Erik: He said different things and used some phrases that were kind of weird and yeah, we've made an example of him more than a few times. Every once in a while we come across people who are fans of the band who have different ideas and different ways of going about things...

UTV: The reason I brought it up was because, yeah, I agree it's silly to just get up on stage and yell "suburban bitches," but I also think that it's good to point out that a lot of kids in the Punk and Hardcore scenes have a habit of not questioning themselves and not questioning their own class status. Granted, his choice of words was stupid, but isn't it good to kind of go up there and point it out, and maybe have people question themselves and why they're middle class and suburban...

Erik: I actually disagree with you. I think most kids in the Punk and Hardcore scene -- even kids that we look at as sort of vacuous sort of run of the mill generic punk kids -- actually question themselves more than most kids in the rest of the world. I think it's boring to say, "Kids in the Punk and Hardcore scene aren't evaluating themselves hard enough..." The kids in the Punk and Hardcore scene -- even the lame ones -- look at a lot more than a lot of the kids that we went to high school with. Kids in the Punk and Hardcore scene -- even the ones who just like Blink 182 -- probably, even from someone like Blink 182, have thought a little bit more about their station in life and their situation then. Most kids are worse than the 'bad' punk kids.

UTV: Right. I've been on tour as well, and I've met a lot of kids, and I'm from Long Island which is fucking suburban wonderland... I've run into so many kids in this scene who really don't have any intentions to question themselves in the slightest. It's just not there. I don't really agree that punk kids tend to, because I don't think they do a lot of the time.

Erik: I think they do a lot more than your average. Honestly, I think they do. Patrick and I both got kicked out of a high school that had 4000 students. There was about 30 kids that were actually pretty down with Punk, or they were skinheads, or they actually knew what was up, and then there was probably another 30 or 40 who were kind of generic, who you'd see every once in a while at a Naked Raygun show and it was a big deal if they'd go to that. But those 30 or 40 kids were still a lot cooler... maybe not **cooler** -- they were all kind of dorks or whatever -- but I think even those kids thought a lot more about those things then the other fucking 3000 kids at the school.

St. Patrick: Well, I think it's kind of weird because I think we're chasing our own tails because you're talking about suburban kids and Punk... I mean, do you know how huge Punk is right now? How absolutely massive? Do you know how many genres are called "Punk" right now? Do you know how many kids that have mohawks only go to like shithop shows like Korn and stuff, that call themselves punk? The thing, is it's not a seedy little underground, there are about 12 seedy little undergrounds. And they run the gamut from genuine in the basement Emo-core to mosh Straight Edge Metal being played at the local Metal clubs to a thousand people and everything in between. It's also really hard to gauge how introspective people really are because you don't know, you really don't know. Maybe people have been really introspective, and maybe they've come out with results that we just don't see eye to eye with.

Erik: You're also on the east coast though, and the east coast has always had weird things going on that are not familiar to us, except for when we come and visit. The east coast and the west coast both have things going on that we're not entirely familiar with. Like, I've never seen a kid in Minneapolis karate kick anything...

UTV: I'm so jealous of you...

Erik: Well, I've just never seen it, except for in joking. You guys have kids here... well, any place you go, there are kids who go to shows who are kind of sorry and get on your nerves, and you kind of wish they weren't there.

St. Patrick: And I've also never heard of a Hardcore kid on the east coast becoming an alderman in the city, you know? Which is not to say that the midwest is best, because obviously we have our share of mohawks and mustaches, you know? ...Haven't heard a record that came out since 1984, which also isn't necessarily an altogether bad thing [laughs]. A lot of stuff is regional, you know?

UTV: There's a lot of noise about bands living off themselves. You guys are touring with Avail, who **do** live off of themselves, and I assume you're making some sort of money off of it. I think there are a couple valid points to the argument against bands living off themselves. First, that for to live off of themselves they have to make certain sacrifices from the DIY scene. They have to play bigger shows and advertise in bigger magazines. And with Punk and Hardcore -- or any music in general I'd hope -- it's supposed to be sincere and passionate. If you're living off it and you're using it to get your next paycheck, I think it becomes scary because you might angle it to a certain sound. You wanna keep a consistently growing audience. How do you manage your band -- where you don't live off the band -- and what do you think about bands living off themselves in Punk and Hardcore...

St. Patrick: Well, this is exactly why we don't tour as often as apparently a lot of people we meet on tour wish we did. Which sounds kind of vain, but I don't really mean it to sound that way. When we go on tour a lot of people are like, "Why don't you tour more?" and like the reason why we don't is exactly what you were just talking about. The thing is we just can't afford.. we have enough of real lives going on, and to be honest with you, we're not willing to make that sacrifice; to save up for six months to tour for six months. To tell you the truth, we are not making the ton of money on this tour that I think a lot of people think we are.

Erik: We make more money on our own tour than we do on a tour like this. As far as your question, you were kind of saying, in order to live off your band you have to make certain sacrifices, sort of against DIY or sort of because you have to play bigger shows or whatever. That's now a sacrifice that bands get to choose, like, do you want to play bigger shows or smaller shows? A lot of bands don't get to make that choice. I'm going to bring up our hometown as an example. We've played basement shows in Minneapolis and on our own play [a big venue] in Minneapolis. That's not a sacrifice, that's a reality. There are places that we eventually got to a point where we like, "We can't play there anymore" because it's not practical anymore. I don't like the idea of those bands who are like "30 people in a basement is cool you know, but we could get 500 people down the street..." No, they don't get to make that choice. Bands do what they do and certain things arise, but it comes in baby steps. It's never just all there on a platter, "You guys want to be huge or you want to be small?" It doesn't happen like that. You don't get to make a choice like that. You do things that you're comfortable with if you're a good band. The bands that people take the piss out of -- and I think deserve to get the piss taken out of them -- are bands that don't take the baby steps. They got one little weird thing that's probably about three years ahead of where they logically would have arrived, and they go right for it. And all of the a sudden they're like, "We're this huge band..."

St. Patrick: Like, "You didn't even hear of us six months ago but here's our LP and we're going on the Warped Tour to promote it..."

Erik: Take our band; it was all baby steps. We've been out touring, people didn't even know we went on tour until last year but we've been touring for six years now. And just this year, we put out our second record on Hopeless, we're on a bigger tour; this year we've also turned down Epitaph and turned down the Warped Tour. So you make choices that you're comfortable with. I've yet to meet a band that was like, "We had a choice to be big or small and we chose small"..

St. Patrick: Because if anybody tells you that, they're full of shit. It's not that cut and dry either.

UTV: Also...I was curious of your opinion; I've actually seen bands where they do angle their sound a certain way in order to enlarge their fanbase and keep selling records. They keep playing more of a catchy pop song or something like that...

Erik: It's a real reality for bands who are living off themselves.

UTV: Right. How do you see your band in that?

St. Patrick: We're too removed from that.

Erik: We're not going to lie and say we don't make any money. We make **some** money, but not near enough for us to live off of.

St. Patrick: Enough that a couple times a year we get a little bit of scratch and we can go out and get a treat. Like, "Oh I just got a royalty check, I can go and get a television" or I can leave for a weekend and go to a hotel for the weekend with my girlfriend or something like that.

Erik: We're not living off the band, but we do know other bands that are living off their band. Honestly -- and this kind of goes full circle to where we were talking about what I do for a living -- of all the places a human in this country can wind up making their buck -- especially when we're talking about small bands who are making just enough money to live comfortably -- I refuse to look down on that.

UTV: I agree. I don't think it's wrong for bands to live off themselves. But it's nerve racking when I know a band in the Punk scene that is sort of angling their sound in a certain direction to make sure that royalty check comes in.

Erik: Right.

UTV: I was curious how you figure D4 in that and your opinion on it.

Erik: We don't even think about it.

St. Patrick: To be honest with you we do not even remotely, vaguely think about it. If we **did**, we would be significantly more stylish than we are... and to tell you the truth, I think we would be rewriting the same songs over and over again.

Erik: I think some of the bands make a lot of money considering they're doing it from a band, but they make a lot less money then... Well, take the Green Days and the Offsprings out of the whole thing... we're talking about bands maybe like Avail. But they're making a lot less money then if they got like entry level jobs at like fucking McDonald Douglas or Honeywell or 3M.

St. Patrick: To tell you the truth though, when you talk about sacrifices; I've even more worried about people that I know that are fucking phenomenal song writers who quit what they were doing because they sacrificed so much that they couldn't fit it into their lives, you know? I'd give anything to have Chad from the Strike still be a songwriter who was putting out records. I'm fucking ecstatic that Frankie Stubbs came back.

Erik: Chad from The Strike is a union electrician. As of the last year he finally decided, "Okay, I was having fun playing music. I wasn't making any money..."

St. Patrick: The funny thing is though that they get on Victory and they go on tour and everybody gives them shit for selling out. They didn't make anything. They got sick of it and they broke up. Now he's a union electrician, and he writes songs in his basement that none of us will ever hear. It's Greg Kinnear... [man walks by van]

Erik: Mr. Kinnear?

Greg Kinnear: How you doing? [walks away]

UTV: Wow.

St. Patrick: Anyway. I think it's kind of a tricky thing too because we're kind of debating two things. I understand the first side of what you were talking about, which is actually something we do agree with too. If there's a band and they're doing something that's really cool, and then all of a sudden there's some new genre... for example, if we saw a band that was just really awesome; semi-political, trashy, kinda poppy but also kind of Hardcore band that was awesome, and then six months later saw them and they were are all clean cut and doing Superchunk/Wedding Present styled shit, then yeah, I'm pretty sure we'd walk away and be like "What the fuck is up with this?" And it has happened before with different bands. At the same time, it's a really hard thing to say. I love the Ramones, but I don't want to be the Ramones. I don't want to do the same album over and over again for 20 years. But I don't want to stray too far either, because I love what we do. We all pretty much like similar things. We like catchy music and we like playing it in an ugly aggressive way. That's pretty much the way we stick to it. There are a lot of people who are like, "Your new record seems a lot uglier, why is that?" and there are people who say, "Your new record seems a lot more polished and poppy." And everybody hears different stuff. The funny thing to us is that nothing is really that much different then anything else. I mean there are different parts done in ways we couldn't have done them before, different ways we've sung things that we couldn't have done before. We've changed a little bit, but it's not like we were ever like "Okay, the Get Up Kids are huge, let's do a Get Up Kids song now."

UTV: Erik, can you explain the lyrics to "J. Harris"?

Erik: That was my first experience with the legal system, from the stand point of having to go and testify against someone because I was subpoenaed because the city decided to prosecute this individual. Basically, this was someone who burglarized my bar and he really didn't get much, basically nothing, but he **did** get caught on the roof by Billy from Dillinger Four who actually held him on the roof after he had shattered a window and broke into the second story where our office was. We had gotten ripped off two nights before more successfully. Anyway. This guy was a pretty bad guy... I'm not supposed to know that, but I know that because when I was subpoenaed to testify, because I was there, the assistant DA showed me his rap sheet, which is illegal. And it showed, yeah, he had sexual assault and he had fucking armed robbery, he had all these things but they hadn't been able to get him for shit and they were just trying to get him off the street. I consider myself someone who's against the cops, but when you're a victim, what's the first thing you do? You look for the cops. And I was sitting there realizing that I was going to put this person in jail, and jail terrifies me. I haven't had to go, but I'm fucking terrified of it. It seems to me that jail is just like the worst possible scenario for your life. These people from the city that were giving me information wanted me to put that person in jail. I know what's going on, I know what they're doing. But I also know he did this, but he didn't really do anything that bad to me. At the same time he was a drug addict -- clearly, he needed treatment, he's not going to get that. I couldn't really bring myself to lie to let him go, because he wasn't going to get it that way either. And it's about the conflicts I had about the first time, being a part of that system.

UTV: Why is there only one Patty song on the record?

St. Patrick: 'Cause I'm a fucking jackass. I just dropped the ball on the writing part of the record. This time around I wrote less proficiently then I usually do, and Erik fucking knocked the ball out of the park. I think a huge bulk of the record he wrote in six weeks.

Erik: Yeah.

St. Patrick: It got to the point that by the time "Let Them Eat Thomas Paine" was done he had two more as well.

UTV: Okay, last question, hopefully it can be brief: Where do you guys lie politically? And how do you think the Punk scene applies... **St. Patrick:** Wow, you want a brief answer? That's the kind of thing I can sit around a kitchen table and talk to someone for about eight hours.

UTV: Well, do you label yourself politically at all?

St. Patrick: For a long time I liked to label myself somewhere between a socialist and a populist. I kind of shed that though. I don't have a problem with anyone else labeling themselves an 'ism,' and actually I addressed this in "An American Banned." I don't really like using 'isms' specifically. I **do** like the idea of socialized medicine; however, I also have Canadian friends that have told me all the horrors of socialized medicine. I love the idea of all of us working for one community; however, I know that I also like getting a ton of overtime and then getting down the next weekend.

Billy: If I think I can get into this... I think that's the downfall of any fucking ism. To apply yourself to any ism, you automatically apply to a rigid set of standards. I don't see a problem with agreeing with several ideas from one certain ism, and then disagreeing with others, and then pulling stuff from other isms. I don't apply to any fucking ism.

St. Patrick: The only thing I really feel fucking adamant about -- I talk about this a lot when I talk to people about this kind of shit -- I probably move heavily toward a populist way of thought...if there's gonna be a minimum wage, make it a wage so that you can actually be able to pursue happiness, pretty cut and dry. I just don't understand how there's a minimum wage, and if you're making that, and even if you're married to someone who's making that and you have one kid you're going to make ends meet. It's just not going to happen. It's also like... if you are hit and run by a car in the middle of the street on your way home from work and you break your leg, you should not have to go into financial duress for the next ten years of your life.

Billy: Which is what happened to me. I was riding my bicycle. I don't have health insurance. Six hundred fucking dollars just to go into the door of the emergency room. Not to be looked at, but six hundred dollars just to be brought through the door. Let alone the fucking ambulance, let alone the care which is nothing, they gave me a four dollar brace. I got wheeled in, they said, "We can do nothing for you, here's a brace." A thousand dollars later I got a fucking brace, and no advice or care whatsoever.

St. Patrick: Yeah. I was about to go off on some other tangent similar to Billy's, but that's a prime example. There should be other ways. It is really weird. I know I am taking this full circle from where we were talking about isms and actually Erik will probably end up being a lot more articulate then either of us were. But, we're just a really fucking aggravated country. You end up with people loving songs about raping each other, and kids shooting kids, and then they look at things like the media and what have you, there are so many other things that play into it. A lot of it has to do with frustrations that stem from economics of this country.

UTV: Well, do you guys believe in the basic American ideal of capitalism and what not?

Erik: "We guys" is also a whole different thing.

St. Patrick: Well, technically capitalism is a philosophy, and I understand the idea that if I do what you do better, then I ought to be able to have the right to step up and do it a different way. Like, Erik's bar, I like the way he does it, it's a good bar. But if Cedar Ave. -- which is where it is -- was a microcosm of America, another bar from up the block could just end up just bullying him out of business. And that is the way America works. It just seems tongue in cheek and something to laugh at, but we all pay the price.

UTV: And where do you see D4 in that? If part of the goal of your band is to make a change? What is your ideal change?

St. Patrick: We go out of our way to make things very affordable. I mean, you could say that certain door prices on this specific tour were a little bit steep, but even the ones on this tour weren't that outrageous. Maybe a dollar more then we would have been comfortable with. If anybody's every noticed, our shirts and CDs, for what we sell them for, we make one dollar. For years we made a quarter or something off a CD, just so that if someone came to a show and liked it they wouldn't have to mail order it for like eleven dollars, they could get it from us for seven. Now we've pushed that up to like a dollar, but we don't feel bad about that. But we go out of our way; usually we have a one sided shirt that's really cheap, then we have shirts that we put a little more money in that look a little nicer and are a little more expensive then that, then we have a really nice shirt that you can get if you wanna drop like nine or ten bucks for it.

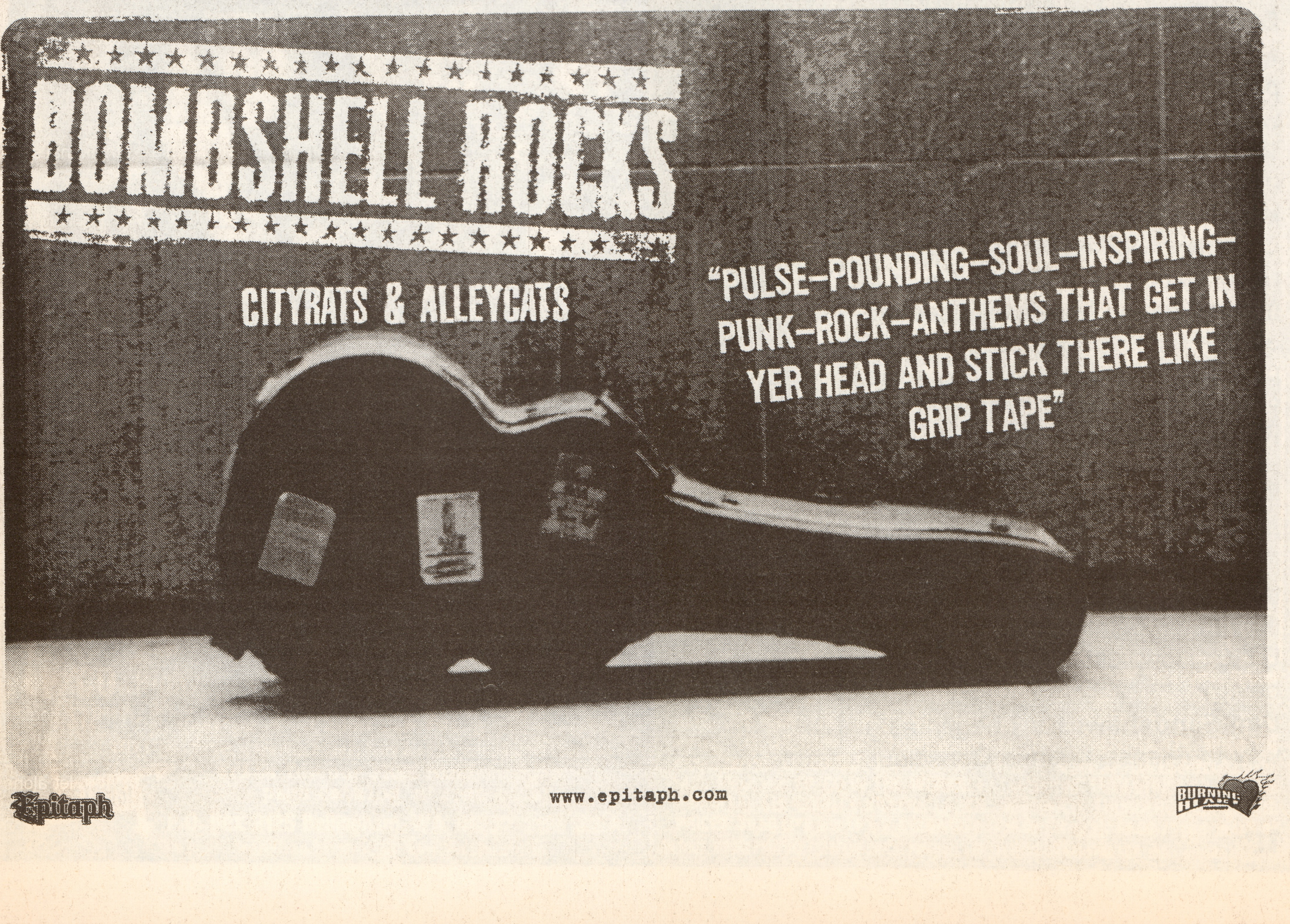
Erik: To answer your original question about where we lie politically... Personally, I feel that as far as moralities are concerned, I'm so far left that it's ridiculous, like I'm ridiculous to the point of libertarianism. I believe in legalization of all sorts of things that...

UTV: Do you believe in libertarianism as far as it's coined today or what was called libertarianism 30 years ago..

Erik:I didn't say I **was** a libertarian, I'm bordering on...

UTV: Right, but libertarian as far as say, what it is today which is like the Libertarianism of sort of free range capitalism or what was called libertarianism in the past, which is anarchism...

Erik: I'm saying libertarianism as far as social issues, socially. As far as social issues go, I consider myself to be as far left as you can go. As far as economic issues go, the reality is that I'm an entrepreneur, I am a capitalist. Our band is capitalistic. Capitalism, and republicanism, and Americanism, I think are very different things. I haven't found a government or sort of economic system that I can fully adhere to. I spent my days as a 16 year old being like "Communism, socialism, no difference... Communism, socialism, fuck you, they're the same thing". You know, like, "Socialists are people who are just afraid to turn over **everything** to the state and fuck them." I know that I'm an atheist. I'm a person who believes in free will, and I make my decisions according to those principles, and there isn't a dogma for that yet. Well, there is, but there isn't an 'ism' for it yet. As far as punk goes, I apply those same principles. Entertainment costs money; it's cost me money all my life. I've spent unknown thousands of dollars on the Punk music entertainment business. Even the most noble of bands, who barely got anything out of that, I've spent that money, as have we all. But one thing I'm an advocate for is that there's money being spent, and when it is getting spent -- and this is something that I've learned -- whether you're fucking Mohinder or you're Snapcase, money is being spent and you're a sucker if you're not getting your part of that. That's what I believe. And you're a sucker if you're letting other people make the prices of what things are. If you're not comfortable with the way things are, don't do it. If you're comfortable, then do it and do it unabashedly. I'm not ashamed of shit that I'm involved with right now, you know what I mean?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BURNING HEART

*Equal Vision is a label that's defined itself for the last 10 years by releasing passionate Hardcore records by bands that stylistically run the gamut from furiously kinetic, as in the case of Converge, to melodic-but-smart, as in the case of Saves the Day. Label guy Dan Sandshaw answered my questions about the label's involvement with Krishna Consciousness, the travails of distribution, and being part of a label that others can only compare themselves to.**-Rich***

Under the Volcano: Please state your name and how long you've been involved with Equal Vision.
Dan Sandshaw: My name is Dan Sandshaw, and I've been working at EVR for just about two and a half years now. I handle a bunch of different duties for the label, including A&R, production manager, and sales manager.
UTV: Where you involved with music previous to this? If so, how?
Dan Sandshaw: I've been involved with music ever since my mother played me Beatles records when I was five years old. As far as the "music industry" goes, that's taken up the better part of my life for the last five years. While attending college, I worked at the school's radio station as a DJ, and also a music director. I basically used the station as a spring-board to meet people in the industry. During a two year span I interned at Earache Records in New York City, did regional promotions for Columbia Records, and also the now defunct A&M Records. After a couple near misses in the job market I ended up taking a job at Equal Vision and moved to upstate New York.
UTV: How did EVR come into being?
Dan Sandshaw: EVR began as a way to release Krishna Conscious

EQUAL VISION
RECORDS

music and literature. The label was originally run by Shelter and Youth of Today frontman, Ray Cappo.

UTV: Where does Ray Cappo fit into the Equal Vision story? Wasn't there an early Revelation connection as well? How? Have you heard from Cappo lately?

Dan Sandshaw: Ray was the original owner of the label many years ago. However, that was a long time before I came into the fold at EVR. The label changed hands in 1992, when Steve Reddy took the helm. I believe Ray was also involved with the early days of Rev, but I don't know the specifics about that situation. We caught up with Ray on the Shelter tour this past spring, and he and Steve remain friends today.

UTV: How important is the religion to the label these day? How important is the Straight Edge movement in what EVR is doing?

Dan Sandshaw: As I mentioned earlier, the Krishna affiliation was very important in the beginning of the label. As the years passed and the Krishna-core movement ran its course, the label changed its focus and started to release non-Krishna bands. Steve is still Krishna, but he is the only person working here who is involved in the religion these days. Straight Edge was, and still is a big part of EVR. We've had our share of sXe acts over the years and we still have active bands who are edge. But we also have bands who are anything but sXe. We look at every band with an open mind when it comes to their beliefs. Some of the staffers here are sXe and some aren't, its pretty much the same case with our bands.

UTV: Maybe an EVR band doesn't necessarily have to be Straight Edge, but would EVR sign a band if they sounded great but were drug addicts or sexually promiscuous?

Dan Sandshaw: That's a tough question. We definitely have a couple bands who enjoy the company of the opposite sex, and some illegal substances. But I don't know if we'd be able to have a happy healthy working relationship with a band of complete drug addicts.... I don't know if any label would.

UTV: I would imagine that a record label founded on largely in part on a belief system would hold itself to a higher standard when conducting business. Are there any standard business practices that perhaps EVR won't indulge in because of ethical conflicts?

Dan Sandshaw: Like I said before, we are open minded when conducting business. I realize that the world of independent music doesn't fit one form or mold. Our goal is get our music to the most amount of people as possible, but I don't think we'd do anything considered shady by people's standards.

UTV: Despite many EVR bands playing incredibly abrasive Hardcore, there seems to be a positive message overall, with some bands even going so far as to list their "goals and ethics" on their bios. This is especially refreshing to me in an era when our president is watching a young girl make love to a cigar while Yassar Arafat is waiting in the rose garden, and most heavier bands are finding it more fashionable (and easier) to be negative than positive. Is EVR just unfashionably shoveling shit against the tide, or is it that maybe the current moral climate creates a hunger for a moral code? Or even still, might some people just view this as...kooky? Do you care?

Dan Sandshaw: I think in some respects we're going against the tide. I don't think all Hardcore should be political in nature, but I also don't think it all SHOULDN'T be. It seems like there are definitely some gaps in the moral climate in Hardcore these days, and that's fine. There is room for everyone to think the way the want to think, and write music they want to play. If people think we're kooky that's fine. EVR's been doing things the way we want to for almost a decade now.

UTV: Some of the EVR bands could be considered activists; does the label get involved in non-musical community activism as well? If so, how?

Dan Sandshaw: We usually leave the activism to our bands, but we are pretty involved in the local community on an individual basis. There are EVR staffers who coach local youth sport teams, and also some who may be found at an animal rights protest. There are also certain staffers who lay pretty low, and that's cool. Everyone does their own thing.

UTV: How did EVR's pressing and distribution deal with Revelation come about?

Dan Sandshaw: The P&D deal came about when there were some cash flow issues at EVR. It was getting tougher to keep records in stock and in print when Rev made an offer to pick up the label's distro and production. The deal really helped EVR get on track to becoming one of the top labels in the Hardcore community. Records sell much better when they are still in print.

UTV: Caroline, Rev's distributor, recently dropped Revelation but chose to continue distributing EVR. How'd you manage that?

Dan Sandshaw: That's a tough one to answer. I think Revelation had some titles that didn't sell very well for Caroline, and when it came time to trim their roster Rev was one of the labels who didn't make the cut. It was a difficult time for us as well, since we were essentially dropped the same time as Rev. We are on good terms with Caroline, and discussed some options we'd like to pursue, and they picked us back up two months later. We have a pretty strong back catalog that consistently sells, and that's pretty attractive for any distributor. Saves the Day, Converge, One King Down, Refused, and Bane sell very well most months.

UTV: You had mentioned that a few years ago, Mordam passed on distributing EVR citing the label's Krishna affiliation -- which was more prominent earlier -- as a main cause. Has anyone brought to their attention that this is discriminatory? I mean, it wouldn't be right to pass on a label because it's run by Christians or Jews, right? Or is it?

Dan Sandshaw: Mordam is an interesting situation in that it's run/set up as a complete democracy, meaning that every person who works for the distribution has an equal say on what labels they work with. I went through the submission process and it seemed like things were looking good, but then the vote came back and we were voted down. One insider, who will remain nameless, mentioned a couple points that were stumbling blocks for them. One of the stumbling blocks were certain aspects of Krishna Consciousness and the religion's view of women. It was unfortunate that we were lost in the religion cloud and we didn't start working together, but that's okay. It seemed like the label's past ended up overshadowing the present and future in their eyes. But in the long run, I wouldn't want anyone to work for the label who didn't want to. I wish them the best; they work with some amazing labels. We ended up doing fine with the distribution network we have set up now.

UTV: It seems that the last Saves the Day record helped bring Equal Vision up a notch in the public's consciousness. Are people that didn't get along with you in the past suddenly kissing your ass? Do you forgive and forget, or sometimes rub it in? What, do you feel, were some factors that may have contributed to the success of this record, aside from the great songwriting?

Dan Sandshaw: Saves the Day was a great example of everything falling into place at the same time. I think we learned a lot about retail marketing while working on the STD record. Our promotions went well, the band landed great tours, the word of mouth spread across the country, and we saw how amazing things can be when everything converges all at once.

As far as people kissing our ass goes... I don't think things have really changed. We don't really have enemies out there.

UTV: You mentioned recently that EVR was going to distribute the Saves the Day release on Immigrant Sun; will you be distributing Sean's back catalog as well, or is there a release by release arrangement, or is it just for Saves the Day?

Dan Sandshaw: We will be picking up the distribution on the acoustic Saves the Day record on Immigrant Sun. Sean and I are old friends, and we ended up deciding to work together on this release. The STD record hasn't appeared in big chain stores, so with us picking up the distro for it, the record will finally be exposed to a group of people who might not know it exists. For now, we will be only distributing Saves the Day, but who knows what the future holds.

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UTV: A little birdie tells me there was some strife with the band The Stryder; can you talk about it?

Dan Sandshaw: The Stryder are the new Rock prodigies on EVR. They play a brand of Rock that people seem to enjoy a great deal. Contrary to popular belief, they don't sound like sXe champs Strife at all.

UTV: Why did Ten Yard Fight break up?

Dan Sandshaw: TYF had pretty much run its course and achieved all the goals they had set for themselves in the beginning of the band. They were definitely one of leaders of the Straight Edge revival movement. The band members have moved on to new jobs, locations, and bands now.

UTV: What's with the beard? Have the bands been requesting you shave it, or are they taking turns playfully tugging on it?

Dan Sandshaw: I've never really enjoyed shaving, and my face has never been able to withstand a razor, so I rock a beard. It varies in length depending on the season. When I end up meeting people for the first time, they usually say I don't look like they expected me to. They expect to see some skinny sXe looking kid, but they end up meeting a big guy who looks like he should be chopping wood or playing in Neurosis.

Whenever I talk to the guys from Until the End (one of our bands, from Florida) they joke about shaving it off while I'm sleeping. Other times they are trying to develop schemes to get me to shave it off. I can't count how many times I've heard, "Hey, how much would it cost to get you to shave it?"

UTV: You also have your own label, named Seasonal Affect. What have you released?

Dan Sandshaw: I've done two releases so far and its been really fun. Past Mistakes was SAR01 and Hopewell was SAR02. I try to focus on packaging when it comes to my label. I'd rather spend some extra money for a nice paper stock and have something I'm really proud of.

Hopewell has recently changed their name to By the Years; look for them rocking out the Northeast.

UTV: What's on your mind as EVR is becoming a classic Hardcore label in its own right?...and when is the next Converge record coming out?

Dan Sandshaw: I'm really proud of what we've accomplished here over the last couple years. We have many different styles of music represented on our roster, and I firmly believe that our bands are influential in whatever genre they fall into. I'm glad I was lucky enough to get involved with a label that I respect, with bands that I love. Now I'm lucky enough to stress out about pressing their records, and finding new bands to bring into the fold.

The new Converge LP *Jane Doe*, should be out sometime in the late spring/ early summer. All I can say is grab a helmet now!!

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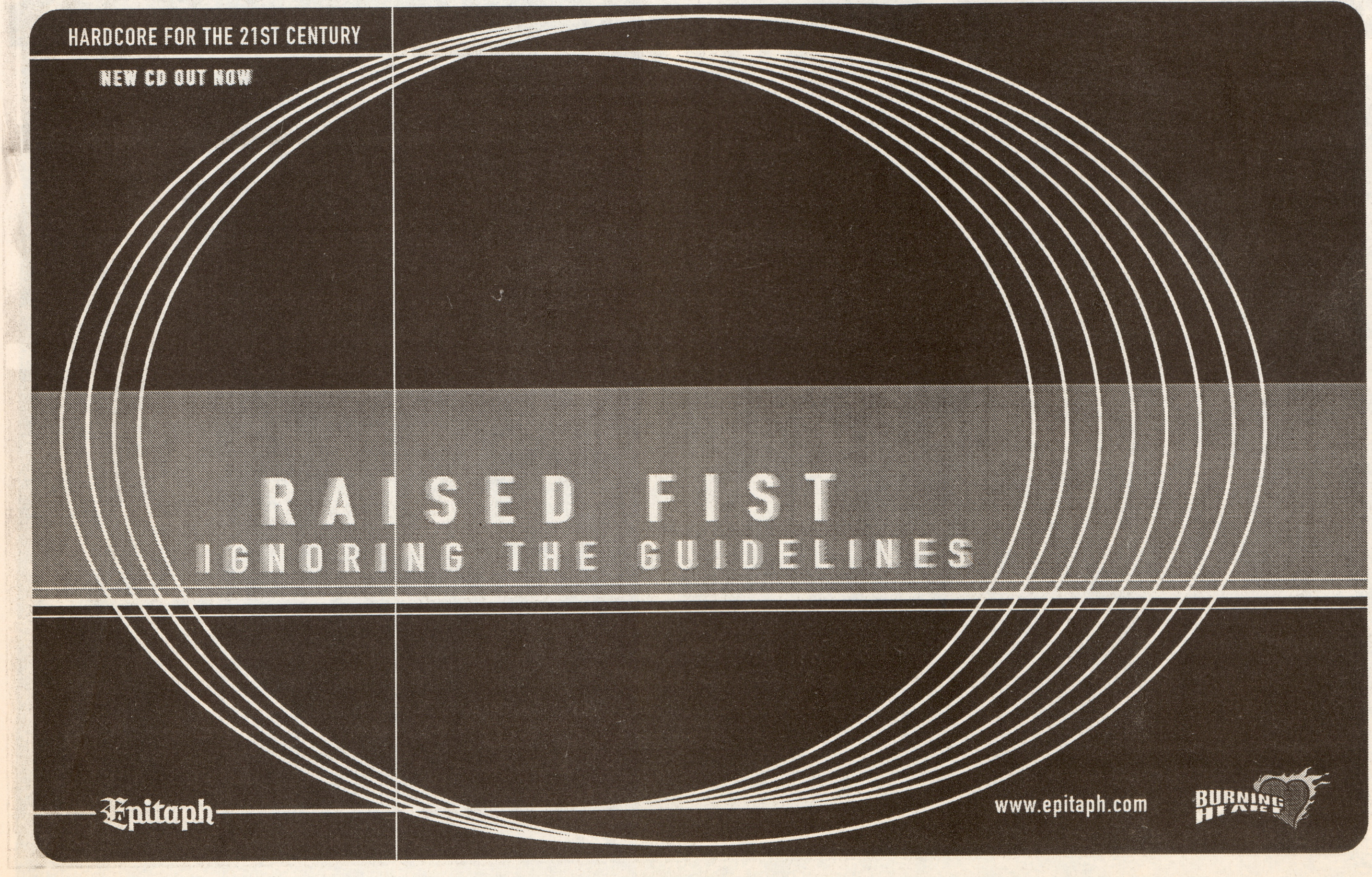


NASHVILLE PUSSY

BY DARREN [illegible]

By now, we know that everyone's trying to bring back "Rock and Roll". While it's arguable as to what Rock is anymore, Nashville Pussy keep their influences to the bare essentials: AC/DC, Motorhead, The Rolling Stones... In other words, they're trashy and damn awesome. But what holds them at the forefront of their subgenre is in defying the odds, having a lineup consisting of two guys and two girls, for instance. Though only a year or two since their first record (which did get a Grammy nomination for "Fried Chicken and Coffee"), the folks of Nashville Pussy have come a long darn way as instrumentalists, writers, and performers.

Though bassist Corey Parks did play on their new release ***High As Hell*** *[TVT], Parks has left the band to take care of some personal matters; Courtney Love has also expressed interest in her playing with Hole. Replacing Corey on bass duties is New York's own Tracy Almazan, known for her work in The Wives and Helldorado. For those uninformed and unfamiliar, Nashville Pussy have shared the stage with everyone from the aforementioned Motorhead and Hole to Marilyn Manson and The Toilet Boys, playing to both sold-out clubs and sold-out arenas. When an opportunity had come about to interview them, I jumped at the chance and found myself talking to one of the coolest and nicest women in rock today – lead guitarist Ruyter Suys – on their drive home from a tour. A special thanks to Chris Lynch for helping to hook it up... No more rambling from me, read on!-**Darren***

Under the Volcano: Hello?

Ruyter Suys: Hey Darren!

UTV: How are you?

Ruyter Suys: It's Ruyter...

UTV: How you doing, Ruyter?

Ruyter Suys: I just phoned in and realized I've got fucking four minutes on this stupid phone card so if it gets cut off, I'll call you right back.

UTV: You rock, you rock. You ready to get this started?

Ruyter Suys: Yeah, let's go.

UTV: Okay, Ruyter – what's the best part about being in Nashville Pussy?

Ruyter Suys: [laughs] Oh, what's the best about being in Nashville Pussy? I don't know, getting your ya-yas out in front of a bunch of strangers. [laughs]

UTV: What do you mean by "getting your ya-yas out in front of a bunch of strangers"?

Ruyter Suys: Just going crazy fucking crazy, man. Every night in front of a bunch of strangers. [laughs]

UTV: What's a typical day out on the road like for you?

Ruyter Suys: Boring. [laughs]

UTV: Boring? What's the typical day?

Ruyter Suys: Oh man, it's just drive drive drive drive, avoid cops, drive drive drive, put up with crappy food and then rock the fuck out and we'll have a good time. We have equal parts boring as we exciting.

UTV: What's a day like **off** the road then?

Ruyter Suys: It's pretty mellow, but we have a really good party scene in Atlanta, so it's great. As well, when we have days off across the country and stuff like that, we tend to explore where we're at and we go pretty crazy. It's great [laughs], we so rarely have a day off. We take one when it comes along, we tend to grab it by the horns, so to speak.

UTV: You say that the days on the road is all driving and putting up with crappy food, then how do you get psyched up before going onstage?

Ruyter Suys: I don't know, man. It's like automatic now. This is the first band I've been in, so it's the only way I know to react when I'm up there. It just comes real natural now, like even when we're practicing in our cramped little studio down in Atlanta, we tend to go pretty crazy. It comes pretty natural.

UTV: You said that this is your first band?

Ruyter Suys: Yeah.

UTV: So you don't have any embarrassing high school skeletons in the closet?

Ruyter Suys: I was in an embarrassing high school band, of course. [laughs]

UTV: Care to tell anything about that one?

Ruyter Suys: I was in a band with two guys that were really into this science-fiction novel they based the whole fucking band on. I never read the book and two guys wrote 20 songs about this damn book. [laughs] I was like the talent mope or something like that. I sang, I sang harmony when we recorded, I played acoustic guitar, regular guitar, I played bass, I played everything. [laughs] I basically played everything and they just basically wrote all these squirrelly songs about something I didn't understand.

[phone card cuts out]

UTV: Hello?

Ruyter Suys: Hi Darren.

UTV: How are you?

Ruyter Suys: Good. I'm on the cell phone now, so hopefully we won't lose you.

UTV: Well, that's good to hear... back to what you were saying about your borderline Prog-Rock high school band -- why exactly did you become a musician?

Ruyter Suys: Ohhhhh god... When I decided I wanted to do it, I was about six, so it couldn't have been for the sex. So I guess the glory.

UTV: The "blaze of glory" like Bon Jovi said?

Ruyter Suys: No, nothing like Bon Jovi was talking about.

UTV: What was your first record?

Ruyter Suys: Probably *Spiders From Mars*... *Ziggy Stardust*, David Bowie album...

UTV: How would you describe your group to someone who's never heard it?

Ruyter Suys: Balls to the wall classic Rock.

UTV: Anything more in-depth to that?

Ruyter Suys: Oh, it's kind of like a... good old-fashioned, down and dirty, high-school, sex, Rock and Roll music. [laughs] Something like that...

UTV: How did Nashville Pussy form?

Ruyter Suys: It was out of desperation, pretty much. Blaine and I were in Nashville and the scene absolutely sucked, and there was nobody good to see at all. We were kind of entertaining ourselves...

UTV: How does it compare having Tracy in the band now versus Corey?

Ruyter Suys: Oh it's fucking great, man. We're becoming a well-oiled machine now. It's really cool, she's an excellent bass player. She's the best bass player I've ever played with. [to Blaine] What, babe? [unheard mumbling possibly about why Radiohead sucks -- and back to me] She's the best bass player I've ever played with. I didn't know it could be this good. [laughs] This is the first time I've ever played with a really good bass player and I'm amazed at how tight we've gotten, it's really cool. Already it's beyond expectations of what it'd be like actually playing with somebody who could play really well.

UTV: How exactly did you find her?

Ruyter Suys: Tracy was playing in a bunch of other bands and we saw her play with Helldorado. She was playing lead guitar and she smoked, she was kicking ass. We saw the band floundering around, playing in New York, playing South By Southwest and not getting much attention and stuff. She really stood out from the band, and was a really capable player and really fucking cool and really wanted to play music. Essentially we kind of felt like we had to rescue her from the situation she was in, even though it was good, just obviously she wanted to move a lot faster than what was in her own life. It was a good opportunity for both of us...

UTV: How would you compare your two records?

Ruyter Suys: I think we got a little better... [laughs]

UTV: Well what aspect -- is it your playing or your songwriting?

Ruyter Suys: Everything pretty much. Yeah, definitely both. We got a lot better in between the two albums, all of us. Blaine was just learning how to sing -- he had never sung before for a band -- but it was the same for all of us. I never played lead guitar before [laughs] or anything like that, so we just tried to make the best damn record possible. In between we wound up learning how to play and stuff like that, learn how to play with each other, and I don't know, we just got a whole lot better in everything. Just going back in the studio with a little more relaxed attitude towards what we're doing was cool, it was a little more luxurious. We actually got to listen to stuff and decide if we wanted to re-do things; the first album we recorded in five days. I think both of them are excellent examples of what we sound like live. I like both of them.

UTV: And what was it like working with Kurt Bloch? What kind of role did he play?

Ruyter Suys: Oh, he's awesome, man. [laughs] The role he plays is he's the one who hoists the glass of red wine at the end of the night and says, "I think that was really rocking and I don't think we can rock much harder than that..." He's excellent. He knows so much about guitar Rock it's ridiculous. He's the perfect guy on our side. He already has our guitar solos bumped up so high I can't complain at all. I can't say anything since he's already got it loud as fuck and if anything, I'm worried if my guitar solos are too loud, which is impossible.

UTV: Did you find him through his work with The Supersuckers, or through a friend?

Ruyter Suys: He'd done an album for a band called The Devil Dogs from New York who are old friends of ours, and he did the best recorded version...

[phone starts to cut out into fuzz...]

UTV: In the booklet of the album, can we still call it "the new album"?

Ruyter Suys: Yeah, [laughs] definitely... It's not even out yet in Europe yet.

UTV: Any idea of when it'll be out in Europe?

Ruyter Suys: No, hopefully sometime in the next few months or something.

UTV: Gotcha.

[phone breaks up and we're disconnected]

UTV: Hello?

Ruyter Suys: Hey Darren...

UTV: Hi again, how are you? Still fine?

Ruyter Suys: We're at a gas station now...

UTV: Well I guess we'll resume then.

Ruyter Suys: [laughs] What was the last thing you said again?

UTV: In the album jacket, you have Lemmy with his last wishes -- why weren't you on his last wishes?

Ruyter Suys: I don't know, but I think I'm thankful. I looooove Lemmy to death, but I don't think I wanna give that guy a lap dance.

> "Oh, I just always hated Courtney Love. She's kinda cool and everything like that, but as a female guitar player, she's like the worst guitar player out there and it's just embarrassing. She is the reason why I have to play guitar, because she sucks so fucking hard.

UTV: Okay, I'm gonna take your word for it, but do you foresee any future collaborations with Lemmy and Motorhead?

Ruyter Suys: I don't know, we might've run our course with those guys. The last time we played with them was in France... a month ago? We played a 24 Hour Motorcycle Race, kind of like Lamont's and it was a French band, us and Motorhead -- so they got to see us play with Tracy for the first time and it was fucking great. We got the Lemmy seal of approval, which is important to us. But I don't know if we're gonna do anything else with them. We did 80 fucking gigs with them and as fabulous as it was, we should let another band have the chance or something like that. [laughs] I'd be happy to tour with those guys forever, and it's kind of weird not hearing at the end of the night. We've become programmed to hear Motorhead at the end of the night...

UTV: Were they your favorite band to tour with, all in all?

Ruyter Suys: Probably, yeah, I'd say so. Out of every band we've been with, they were probably the most like us. It was so fucking easy, just immediate comfort, they're great guys. Fucking smart and funny and pranksters, and as into rocking out as much they are, they're into having a ridiculously large amount of fun in every spare moment they have. They get bored so fast it's ridiculous...everything they own comes from a joke shop or a spy shop, I swear. It's burps or farts or he tape records for later on, like blackmailing and shit like that. They've been on the road for 25 years and they know every joke in the book, man.

UTV: What exactly was it like doing dates with Marilyn Manson?

Ruyter Suys: Oh, it was alright. It was a learning experience.

UTV: Would you like to tell the readers of the fine publication as to what exactly made it a learning experience? What did you learn?

Ruyter Suys: Well, mostly we learned that there are a whole lotta fucking rules to this industry, that was the first thing we had to learn. We had it real easy playing our little Rock and Roll club shows where you could hang out hours after the show and party with people that like you, and then you get into an arena where it's like a challenge to have fun. You have to out of your way to grab backstage to have a party and stuff. It's a task to go and find someone to meet all the hot chicks, shit like that. And on top of it, they don't let you hang out in the hallways. [laughs] They don't let you do anything. We weren't allowed to bring beer onstage, the shows were over at 7:30, it felt like fucking high schools because there were fluorescent lights everywhere. People bark at you "get offstage, get offstage"...

UTV: Well was the money at least decent?

Ruyter Suys: The money was at least okay, but we didn't do it for the money. I think we did it for the volume, the opportunity to be that loud-- that was the loudest we had ever been up until that point.

UTV: Oh, I thought you said Valium.

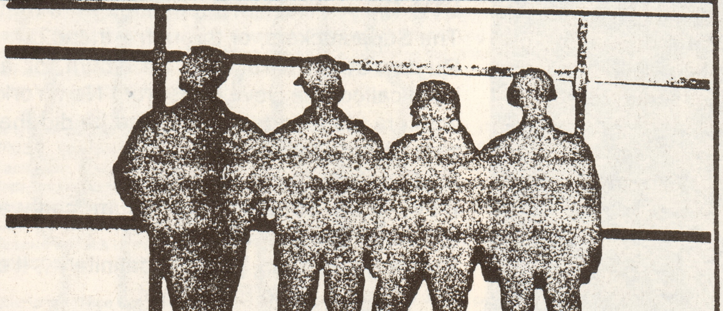
Ruyter Suys: [laughs] No, not the Valium, no way, vollllllume.

UTV: How would you rate your recent dates with The Toilet Boys?

Ruyter Suys: We did one show with The Toilet Boys in New York.

UTV: Oh, I thought that was a tour, you did local openers for all the shows?

Ruyter Suys: Yeah, we hooked up with all sorts of people. For the most people, this tour has had a band from New Orleans called Supergroup, which was, I don't know what they are -- four-piece Rock and Roll band, two of the guys are from Alaska, they're like Eskimos or something like that [laughs] and they fucking rock. Total AC/DC



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shit, so it's right up our alley. We did a couple of dates with The Dictators who are like, kings of New York Punk Rock. They played with AC/DC in the mid-seventies -- shit like that -- and they rule. And we played one show with The Toilet Boys and this awesome all-girl band from New York called Bottom who are a three-piece super-heavy band, and they were really cool. When we were in Canada we played with a band called The Headstones who were kinda famous in Ontario. They played three shows... we opened up for them two nights, they opened up for us one night, and we wound up playing to 2500 people and shit like that. We had no idea who they were, and they were playing to this huge crowd. [laughs] We played with the Misfits, to top it off, which was really cool, in Canada. It was in Halifax and it was nuts, I'd never seen The Misfits before. Totally cool.

UTV: So there's finally something to do in Nova Scotia?

Ruyter Suys: Right, that one night there's two things to do and they didn't want to split the crowd, so we played together. [laughs]

UTV: Moving on, who would you say if your least favorite band of all time?

Ruyter Suys: Oh God... [laughs]

UTV: If there's anyone you'd like to slander... If not, you can just say who you like -- is there anyone you flat out don't like or any scene that you're not too into?

Ruyter Suys: Oh, I totally am not into that Rap Metal thing. I mean, we're going out on tour with The Insane Clown Posse, and I'm waiting for those guys to prove me wrong, but I hate that shit. I still totally hate Rap and pretty much everything Rap-related. Kid Rock is the only stuff I can stomach at all. Other than that, Smashing Pumpkins have gotta be the bane of my existence, I fucking hate that shit. That's the worst shit in the world, man. A whiny, fucking onionhead bitching that nobody's buying my record and all that bat shit, and even, Courtney Love. [laughs]

UTV: Resenting Courtney Love and Corey considering Hole, what exactly is being felt in the Nashville Pussy camp right now?

Ruyter Suys: Oh, I just always hated Courtney Love. She's kinda cool and everything like that, but as a female guitar player, she's like the worst guitar player out there and it's just embarrassing. She is the reason why I have to play guitar, because she sucks so fucking hard. Every time I see her with a guitar I just wanna take it away from her. I finally saw them live on MTV or VH-1 or HBO, one of those, it had a live Courtney Love thing and her volume thing wasn't even on. She wasn't even doing a damn thing up there, it was hanging around her neck. It was like when Marilyn Manson put on a guitar, it was just lame. Go back to walking around and acting freaky, that's what you're best at. I just hate watching her play guitar, it's just embarrassing. [laughs]

UTV: Speaking of guitar heroes, you obviously took your name from a Ted Nugent song...

Ruyter Suys: The Nuge himself...

UTV: You gotta love The Nuge. Has he ever responded to your name?

Ruyter Suys: Oh fuck, yeah. He interviewed me for *CMJ* magazine like two years ago and he took great pride in naming us, having wanted us to thank him. [laughs]

UTV: You guys are on the West Memphis Three comp. Would you like to tell a little about that?

Ruyter Suys: Well, there's not much to it. Have you seen the movie?

UTV: I've seen both documentaries, yeah.

Ruyter Suys: Yeah, so... If they asked you to contribute, would you?

UTV: Oh, of course. Did Eddie [Spaghetti, singer of The Supersuckers] personally contact you or...?

Ruyter Suys: The Supersuckers are really good friends of ours; we've known them for years. They are as non-involved in everything as we are, and just the fact that they would become involved in something that might accidentally be described as a "cause" or something like that... We're pretty cynical, apathetic people when it comes to most political things, but just the fact that they'd get involved told us that we should too. We saw the movie and... god damn. [laughs] Definitely something that needs someone paying attention to it, it was definitely pretty devastating. We have to show it to Tracy because she used to be a lawyer and I want to get her bent on it and she hasn't seen the movie yet.

UTV: Oh wow, a lawyer?

Ruyter Suys: Yeah, she used to be a prosecuting lawyer for the DA's office...

UTV: Wow, do you know where she went to school or any of that?

Ruyter Suys: Somewhere in New York.

UTV: Somewhere in New York...

Ruyter Suys: She's a raised Manhattan-ite...

UTV: That's probably the most impressive thing I've...

Ruyter Suys: [laughs] We're like a Rock and Roll band with two university graduates in it now.

UTV: I think that's phenomenal. I think college is overrated and all but...

Ruyter Suys: We're the shining example of that. I mean, get your education and then you learn "Hey, I still want to be in a Rock band." We tried to be responsible.

UTV: Kind of moving into the future, what it is looking like for your group?

Ruyter Suys: Well, we're gonna have four Halloweens...[laughs] Our drummer is getting very excited, he has many costumes planned already and then we're going on tour with Insane Clown Posse for awhile, and I have a feeling we're gonna keeping bugging AC/DC to take us out on-tour. I don't know, we're going to Japan, Australia, and New Zealand next year, and we're gonna keep playing. We're just having a ball out here, we've got a whole new lease on life with Tracy in the band and it's excellent and we wanna show everybody. We wanna go everywhere we've already been and a thousand places we haven't been. I wanna play Alaska, you know?

UTV: Is Tracy gonna do any fire-breathing, or is that out of the picture?

Ruyter Suys: Hell no. [laughs] We wouldn't make her do that.

UTV: What is she putting into the stage show now?

Ruyter Suys: Oh man, she's all over the place. She's great, she's all over the place, she's just starting to come into her own, it's really cool. She wants the songs to be second nature, but she's getting the songs under her belt so well that she's starting to spaz out onstage, which is great. [laughs]

UTV: And what of recording is there, looking ahead...

Ruyter Suys: We're gonna be recording a couple of songs for a few tribute albums. Have you ever heard Turbo Negro?

UTV: Yes I have.

Ruyter Suys: Yeah, we're doing a track for a Turgo Negro tribute album, and I think we're also doing one for a Twisted Sister tribute album.

UTV: Yeah, I believe they're doing "Sin City" by AC/DC on their own tribute album.

Ruyter Suys: You're kidding!

UTV: They covered that when they were first a cover band out here on Long Island...

Ruyter Suys: Oh shit, man, maybe we should cover it too, because I think are the best songs are taken. We wanted to do "Shoot 'Em Down"... you know that song?

UTV: Yes I do...

Ruyter Suys: But Motorhead already took that so...

UTV: Well, if you gave Lemmy the lap dance. [laughs]...Maybe you can change spots on there...

Ruyter Suys: Maybe if Jeremy gave Lemmy the lap dance... Then we'll have some blackmail. Every time we're out on the road with those guys, we'll tape something that's even remotely incriminating and they made us rip the videotapes up. [laughs] There's professional for you.

UTV: Looks like I've a lot to strive to! But finally, Ruyter, any last words for the kids?

Ruyter Suys: No, man, just loosen up. Loosen up and get laid. ☺

LOWER CLASS BRATS

by Rich

Lower Class Brats are a Punk band outta Austin, Texas, that have garnered a loyal following by bringing the sound of the street to the kids. I had the pleasure of speaking to singer Bones Delarge about the band's latest release, ***The Plot Sickens****, [Punk Core] and rebellion in general.-**Rich***

Under the Volcano: You're being recorded. Thanks for calling back – I feel like I've accomplished something today!

Bones Delarge: I was looking for a job today; I feel like I accomplished something too...

UTV: What kind of job are you looking for?

Bones Delarge: Anything that'll pay me more than $6.50 an hour...Hold on...lemme get my bong...[Sound of a bong hit, then Bones hacking and coughing]...

UTV: Ladies and gentlemen, Bones is smoking pot...

Bones Delarge: Yeaaauuuh...[hack] no problem. It was good for me...so, what's up?

UTV: How long have you guys been around?

Bones Delarge: We've been around, we're going on six years now.

UTV: You're closer to being 30 than 18...

Bones Delarge: Yeah, all of us are 30 or over...

UTV: Do you feel this gives you an advantage or disadvantage over someone who might be just coming into the punk scene?

Bones Delarge: Playing Punk?

UTV: Yeah.

Bones Delarge: I think rebellion happens because the time is right to rebel. I don't think age has anything to do with it. I know a lot more bands than somebody who comes in when they're 18, if that's any advantage, but I don't think that's any advantage at all. Rebellion is rebellion is its purest form.

UTV: How did you end up working with Punk Core, over labels like TKO or GMM?

Bones Delarge: Our first couple of singles were on Helen of Oi! out of Europe, and Dave [from Punk Core] had gotten in touch with us to do some distributing, before he started doing a label I guess...It was right before he put out the first Battle Cry LP, and he asked us if we had any more songs from our demo tape, so we gave him five songs to do a 12", which ended up being the *Punks, Skins, Herberts and Hooligans* 12". And we put that out on Punk Core. Punk Core couldn't offer us what we wanted, so we ended up going with GMM and Helen of Oi! again to do some more stuff, and TKO...now that Dave's gotten his head out of his ass [laughs] he's been able to offer us a lot more. I think Punk Core's the strongest label in the United States as far as Punk Rock goes. He's able to offer us basically anything we want. Me and Dave were very tight friends, and it's better that way, when one of your best friends runs the label.

UTV: You had a singles collection come out on GMM, right?

Bones Delarge: No, actually the first three 7"s came out on Combat Rock out of France, and that's an eight song 12". We haven't done a complete singles collection; that will be coming out on Punk Core within the next year or two.

UTV: The actual sound on this record is tighter and more polished than other stuff I've heard from the band. Was this by design, or is the band just getting better at what you do?

Bones Delarge: Some of it was by design...I think we were getting weary of the Street Punk sound; when we came out we were classified as a Oi! band 'cause there was no one else playing our style in the South. I guess then the Street Punk thing got really big, so we got pigeonholed really fucking fast, which is no fault of our own, or of the people that bought our records, it's just what people saw in magazines and that's what they bought. Since then I think we've become tighter and a lot more polished. The sound has grown on its own. Some of it was by design, but I think we're starting to look at our roots a little more. I'm looking back at English Punk, I'm looking back at the records I used to listen to when I was a kid, Like Battalion of Saints and Mad Parade, which both are tributed on the new LP.

UTV: From your lyrics, you view yourself as an underdog, even in the punk world. Where does this come from?

Bones Delarge: I think it may come from the fact that we've watched our friends come and go in the punk community -- up or down -- and it's one thing we never wanted to do. I want to be able to pick and choose my audience. If there's some kid out there in a Lower Class Brats T-shirt with big baggy pants, I'm gonna make fun of him. I don't give a fuck if he likes our music or not -- he should know better than to come to one of our shows with baggy pants on, know what I mean? I think people can't choose their audience, so they go with it, or they want to be able to choose their audience so much that they jump to a bigger label which therefore chooses their audience for them. I DO WHAT THE FUCK I WANNA DO, OKAY? If you don't like it, fuck off, suck my dick. Obviously the kids like it, or they wouldn't be buying the records, y'know?

UTV: Are you an angry person?

Bones Delarge: In general, no, I don't think I'm that angry of a person...maybe in some of the things I write, but not in my actions, no.

UTV: You hit me as being a very confrontational person when the circumstances call for it. Tell me about the last time you had to get in someone's face...

Bones Delarge: I think the last time was we played a show down here with The Riffs from Portland, and there was some big hairy fuckin' dickhead that wouldn't get off the stage. He was standing up, screaming at me that he wanted to kick my ass, and I was just like, "Go for it!" He started unplugging shit onstage and I just started to push him. He got up and he tried to sing...a lot of people just wanna be up here onstage and sing along, have a good time, alright. Then he starts jumping up and down, running into me, running into everybody, so we just stopped and humiliated the fuck out of this guy from stage. But nothing happened; there hasn't been any real violence at a show for years. Fights, with us onstage, it hasn't happened for maybe three years. The last time that happened, I think Rick actually jumped off the stage and took off his bass and actually hit somebody in the face with it. I think that people have figured out that we're up there to play and have a good time...I think that people have realized that we're not a politically active band, and that we're not something they have to confront if they don't believe in our politics because we have none.

UTV: Dave from Punk Core prides himself on running an apolitical label, and your lyrics tend to be more a more personal take on the world than what's usually considers "political."

Bones Delarge: I'd like to think so, yeah...a lot of the bands I **still** listen to have more insightful than political lyrics. I think that's a key point in my personal taste in having it come out in the band, where you take a band like The Casualties that write personal lyrics mixed with politics. That's his take on life. My voice is the voice of the band -- it's not particularly the voice of everyone else in the band.

UTV: However, it seems the Brats have a strong connection to the one of the most political novels in print, *A Clockwork Orange*, (by Anthony Burgess), from the Nadsat slang used in some lyrics, to taking your last name from the book's main character. What gives?

Bones Delarge: From what I see in the book and the film *A Clockwork Orange*, I've actually lived a lot of that life; I'm very connected to it. It's changed a lot of my being to what I feel I am now. What I get from it is more a personal strife against society, and not a political one. It's a freedom of choice, it's freedom of thought; it's doing what the fuck you want to do, when you want to do it, and whether it's right or wrong, you should be able to decide that. That's a personal thing; it has nothing to do with any political system whatsoever. That has more to do with the Church of Satan than anything else. Not to say that I'm a Satanist, but you know what I mean...

UTV: You just said you've lived parts of that life. What do you mean?

Bones Delarge: Just the lifestyle I grew up in, being thrown in prison for things I didn't do, and for things I **did** do. And coming out of there, and seeing how life treats you differently after you get out. I broke off ties with a lot of friends, I had friends that wouldn't talk to me...trying to go back to my family, I haven't talked to my family, because a few of them didn't think that what happened was right...and going full-force back into my life, and trying to lead it **right**, trying to remember the difference between right and wrong this time, but still have fun doing it.

UTV: Wow...I just wanted to thank you for that... There's another band on Punk Core named The Devotchkas, which is also a slang term from *A Clockwork Orange*. Does the connection extend to other bands on Punk Core?

Bones Delarge: I don't think that's a connection in Punk Core; I think that's a big connection to the punk scene in general. In dealings with the movie and the book, I think it's a cult film. I guess if you're hanging around the gay club scene you're gonna see *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, I don't know. The punks go see *A Clockwork Orange*.

UTV: You recently told me that a junior high school teacher made you read *A Clockwork Orange* for class.

Bones Delarge: Yes, she **did** make us read *A Clockwork Orange* for class, and I think that changed a lot of my well-being there.

UTV: That's pretty irresponsible of that teacher, don't you think?

Bones Delarge: It was in my Humanities class, and it was high school, not junior high. My English teacher made us read *A Clockwork Orange*...she was a hippie chick, and I think she was getting us to learn to understand language you wouldn't normally understand, so I think that was her whole point. I think the book was absolutely brutal for a ninth grader. I had already seen half the film when I was a kid and fell asleep, but the book changed a lot of shit, and made me think differently about my life. Maybe that's why I ended up going to prison...who the fuck knows?

UTV: Here, my little droog, is the word association portion of today's observation. I'm going to give you a word, tell me what comes to mind. **Punk Rock**...

Bones Delarge: Just being yourself and doing what you think is right, whether it's right or wrong by any other means...

UTV: Stupidity...

Bones Delarge: Stupidity? A few old roommates I've had, and one or two old girlfriends.

UTV: Love...

Bones Delarge: Um...that's the hardest one...a few old roommates and one or old girlfriends? [laughs]

UTV: Better question: **What** do you love?

Bones Delarge: More than anything else in this world I love music.

UTV: Second to music...

Bones Delarge: Second to music? My family and my girl.

UTV: George Bush and Al Gore...

Bones Delarge: Eh...this is a tough one, being from Texas. I'll have a lot of people on my ass [laughs] just kidding. To tell you the truth, as far as its gone right now, I really don't give a fuck. I **did** start to, in the beginning, but it doesn't even matter anymore. It's come to the point -- at the date we're speaking now -- it's not even in my mind anymore. It's hard to choose the lesser of two evils, because there's no such thing. I really feel that if voting changed anything it would be illegal in the first place, which is why this [ballot recounts and legal action] is taking so long.

UTV: Is Gore a sore loser, or is Bush being dangerously aggressive?

Bones Delarge: I think one guy is trying to nab it while the other is being too fair for his own good.

UTV: You guys got a new drummer, right?

Bones Delarge: We did get a new drummer, yeah; Brent from The Dead End Cruisers is playing drums for us.

UTV: What happened?

Bones Delarge: Rob wasn't able to go to Europe with us. We didn't want him out of the band, but it turned out that just after he told us he wasn't able to go to Europe with us, he got into a car wreck and busted up his arm. It just turned out that Brent's gonna be with us the next year. We're gonna see what happens.

UTV: When are you going to Europe?

Bones Delarge: I think our first show is April 19th...We're going for five weeks. It should be awesome. Like I said, being good friends with the guy that runs your label is the best thing that any band could have. We get our contract like no other bands usually do, with a handshake and a check, basically [laughs]. Being a punk label, he did it in a very punk way by just going: "I wanna put out your band, here's some money, don't fuck me over and I won't fuck you over." Everything has worked great since. I don't see us leaving Punk Core anytime in the near future.

UTV: Anything in closing?

Bones Delarge: Thanks a lot for the interview. I think *UTV* is a great zine, and I wish you all the best; I hope you wish us all the best as well.

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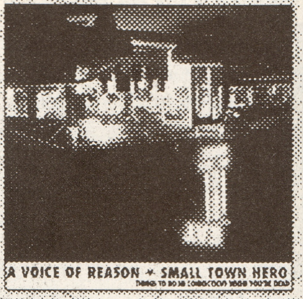
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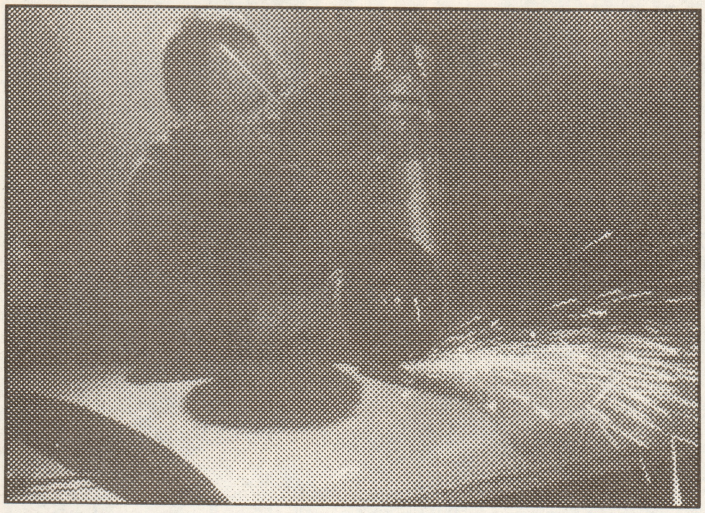


PAUL LEMOS

Sorry for my absence last time around. There's no good excuse. I was just a lazy procrastinating slob. Not much has changed this month...It's the day after Thanksgiving and I'm just getting started. The strange thing is that I really enjoy writing this column, but once I start, I know that I'll be engaged for some thirty hours or more...Writing is a difficult process. I wish I had the natural ability of Rich Black, a guy who can sling it for all it's worth. Oh fuck it. Time's running out, so I better get going. A lot of exciting stuff has appeared in the three months since I last wrote: here's an abbreviated run down...

Some fine new and reissued items from the ever prolific, newly energized **King Crimson** are now available domestically through **Virgin Records.** Newly repackaged, 20 bit remastered editions of the classic ***Larks' Tongue in Aspic***, ***Starless and Bible Black***, and **"*Red*"** are essential items, documenting the apex of this great band's creative powers. These three titles feature the Fripp, Bruford, Wetton, Cross line-up, my personal favorite group of all time. Initially released in the early seventies, this music remains as intimidating as ever. This intensely complex, powerfully emotional music explores realms of darkness previously untravelled by major label bands. Crimson's ability to shift from passages of bruising sonic power to mournful gossamer melodies within the context of tightly structured pieces or otherworldly improvisations was absolutely stunning. This was a group that shared a magical, almost telepathic musical communication, creating work of majestic beauty. *Larks' Tongues*, featuring madman percussionist Jamie Muir, is the most structured of the three and perhaps their most inspired, groundbreaking work to date. A difficult, visionary masterpiece. "Starless" finds the band moving from short songs of blazing metallic ferocity to long, brooding instrumental passages of pure foreboding. Here, the group moves further into the abstract, incorporating the dark improvisations of their live set. "Red", issued after the group broke up, and marked by the absence of violinist David Cross (who does appear as a guest artist), is perhaps Crimson's darkest and most difficult work. An album of extremely heavy, rigidly structured instrumentals, chilling pre-industrial soundscapes, and utterly beautiful epic songs. What a glorious swansong this was. Obviously, Crimson would rise from the ashes once again a few years down the line, but for me, the band would never reach such dizzying creative heights as captured on these three brilliant recordings. Actually, the present formation is perhaps the most intense line up since that of the early seventies. The absence of Bruford and Levin has allowed for a tighter, more fully focused musical attack. Just listen to the massive live three CD set, **"Heavy ConstruKtion"** (Discipline Records) and you will no doubt agree. The first two discs present a complete set list from the band's recent European tour, including tracks from the recent *ConstruKtion of Light* album as well as selections from *Thrak* and *Vrooom*. A few unreleased pieces and delectable improvisations are also included, and the playing throughout is as potent as ever. The real treat, however, is the inclusion of the third CD, which contains improvisations from various dates. Here, the group really shines, as Fripp's solos explode in rushes of pure adrenaline, propelled by Mastelotto's polyrhythmic barrage, creating a sort of heavy metal drum n'bass. This is thoroughly modern music and the best Crimson I've heard in many years. (Note: all of the above items can be obtained through Discipline Global Mobile.)

I am also pleased to announce the release of 11 fine Reggae titles, the first installment from **Virgin Record**'s classic **Front Line** reissue series (available domestically through **Caroline** Records). During the late 70's and early 80's, when reggae was in peak form, Virgin issued nearly 40 albums by many of Jamaica's greatest singers, MCs, and Dub producers. Along with the work released by Island Records, these recordings opened the ears of the world to the beautiful, passionate and deeply spiritual music being made in tiny, low-tech studios in Jamaica. Now available on CD for the first time, at budget price, are the first 11 albums, remastered, and repackaged with original artwork. Both **I Roy**'s ***Heart of A Lion*** and **U Roy**'s ***Jah Son of Africa*** are solid examples of these famous "toaster's" work, as they rhyme over studio tracks laid down by Reggae's finest players. The Jamaican toasters preceded American rappers by nearly a decade, and were, no doubt, responsible for the birth of the genre, as they would free-style over records, rhyming in heavy patois. Both U Roy and I Roy are in fine, rather subdued form here, as they are captured in the prime of their careers. For Dub enthusiasts, search out both ***The Ice Breakers With The Diamonds Planet Mars Dub*** and **Vital Dub's *Well Charged.*** The former is a collection of deep bass driven grooves, enhanced by the gorgeous vocal melodies of The Mighty Diamonds, while the latter is a deep roots, instrumental album of stoned bliss.Both discs feature prime dub selections, played by crack studio musicians. Unlike the bullshit digital dub of the nineties, these recordings reflect the roots of the form, the organic rhythms of drums and bass with shards of vocal, piano, horns etc, echoing in and out of the mix. The aforementioned **Mighty Diamond**'s ***Ice On Fire***, along with **Culture**'s ***Harder Than The Rest*** and ***Cumbolo***, **Johnny Clark**'s ***Rockers Time Now***, **The Gladiators' *Trench town Mix Up*** and **Gregory Issac**'s ***Cool Ruler*** represent the singers. While each artist possesses a very individualized style, all of them share common inspiration and sing about the hardships and inequities of Jamaican life. The Diamonds' album is the lightest and most delicate of the batch, with its rich harmonies and mellifluous instrumental passages. Here the group was moving away from the more somber meditations of their debut, flirting with R&B and Pop. Still, "Ice on Fire" is an appealing disc by Jamaica's finest vocal trio. Culture and The Gladiators were deeply political groups whose work is imbued with the spirit of Ratafarianism. While the songs on these albums are richly melodic and beautifully sung, the sadness and anger of their words is clearly evident, lending power and pathos to the work. Johnny Clark and Gregory Issacs are two of the more famous names among Jamaican vocalists, and both discs are stellar representations of their art. Issacs' album is particularly excellent, and clearly illustrates the mournful beauty of his songs, which would gain massive world wide acclaim. The last of the lot, and definitely the strangest of the series is **Prince Far I**'s ***Message from the King.*** Supported by the usual team of great studio musicians (who provide most of the instrumental tracks for almost all these recordings), the deeply religious Prince Far I chants his lyrics in his singularly tuneless Jamaican growl. He is not really a singer, nor is he a toaster,but in actuality a preacher of Rastafarian philosophy, using music as a medium to spread the word of God. Like the music of Culture and The Gladiators', Far I's album is intensely political and definitely not for the timid. All in all, these first 11 reissues provide a comprehensive view of the various Reggae forms of the late '70s, and all are worthy of your immediate attention.

New from the ever unpredictable **Voiceprint** label are a few fine releases. **Roger Eno** continues creating lovely semi-classical pieces of rare elegance on ***The Long Walk Home.*** Incorporating a host of electronic and acoustic instruments, Eno's delicate, carefully written compositions retain richness and warmth. Each piece is part of an intimate, timeless, and often melancholy musical journey, one in which each musical timbre and tone is essential to the whole. Composers like Roger Eno, who create such subtle, concise music from the heart, are sadly often ignored in this bloated musical marketplace, but thankfully they quietly continue contributing significant beauty to the world. *The Long Walk Home* is yet another gem from this very underrated composer. Finally ***Commuters***, **Dagmar Krause's** collaborative EP with pianist Ronald Heiloo and composer Harold Schellinx has been rescued from obscurity and reissued on CD. Originally issued in 1983 on some tiny indie label, this strange 16 minute EP is a must for Dagmar fans. For those unfamiliar with the name, Ms. Krause's singularly pained, world weary voice has graced many wonderful records by the likes of Henry Cow, Slapp Happy, Tower of Babble, The Art Bears etc.. *Commuters* is an austere collection of ten brief character portraits, delivered cabaret style, in Dagmar's thick German accent, with piano accompaniment. Certainly, Henry Cow and Slapp Happy fans will want to locate this one! For **Gentle Giant** fans, the new ***Live Rome 1974*** will come as a welcome surprise now that Universal's box set release has officially been canceled. Although the sound quality isn't perfect, the performance is solid, capturing the group in fine form, near the peak of their career before lapsing into the commercial dreck of later work. Indeed, this was an incredibly virtuosic band whose dynamic music was both intricate and melodic. Highlights include the 27 minute "Nothing at All / Plain Truth" (replete with 10 minute drum solo).

New from **Bomp** are a couple of required items for the true rock n' roll completist. **Iggy and the Stooges *10/6/73 Michigan Palace*** is absolutely essential for Stooges fans, and by far the best quality live material that Bomp has issued. This is, in fact, the best sounding live Stooges recording I've heard, surpassing the quality of the classic *Metallic K.O.*. The material is again culled from the *Raw Power* era, but here the group is in fine musical form, tight and self assured. Although I have often found it difficult to get through so many tinny bootleg versions of songs like "Head On" and "Heavy Liquid", the versions here are truly burning. Technically, the band had their shit together that night. As usual, Iggy's in conflict with audience members, but such contention doesn't interfere with the delivery of the songs. *Michigan Palace* isn't the morbid spectacle that a lot of Stooges fans sought; it is, however testament to the fact that this was one great fucking band in its day. Another fine piece is the reissue of **The Original Modern Lovers**, a set of demos produced by Kim Fowley. I'm not sure if this stuff actually predates the one official Modern Lovers LP that John Cale produced in the early '70s, but these versions are definitely worth hearing. Although many of you know Jonathan Richman as the dip shit from *There's Something about Mary*, his early work with The Lovers, inspired by The Velvet Underground and The Stooges, was pretty essential in the pantheon of great Rock n' Roll, and was, in turn a huge influence on the first generation of New York and UK punk bands.

For those of you seeking the very best in progressive music, be sure to hear **Cuneiform's** new archive release by **Gilgamesh**, ***Arriving Twice***. Consisting of nearly an hour of unreleased recordings from the early and mid '70s, *Arriving Twice* is a veritable feast for the ears. Founder and main composer, Alan Gowan led an ever changing ensemble of crack players through wonderfully complex, delicately melodic instrumentals, imbued with the spirit of joy and adventure. Although Gilgamesh isn't as well known as groups like Soft Machine, Hatfield and the North, and National Health, their work is considered some of the very finest of the "Canterbury" period. For those unfamiliar with this music, it was a vital combination of electric Jazz and progressive Rock with slight classical shadings. The playing was top-notch, but extremely subtle, always focused on the performance of the ensemble as a unified entity. Thanks to Cuneiform, this vigorously creative, intelligent music is now available after sitting in the can for nearly 25 years! (Soon to follow is a supposedly phenomenal archive disc from National Health...Stay tuned)

From France's excellent **Sonore** label comes the incredible new **Ruins** CD, ***Pallaschtom***, one of the most intense listening experiences I've had in many months. This virtuosic, high powered Japanese duo, consisting of only drums and bass, creates some of the most ferocious music you will encounter. Inspired by the visceral, highly technical work of great innovators like Magma and Mahavishnu Orchestra, Ruins plays tightly structured compositions of incredible intricacy, never remaining in one time signature for more than a few seconds. Most of these 17 pieces are performed at blinding speed with unbelievable technical accuracy. Imagine early Mahavishnu Orch. doing Grindcore, and you will have some slight idea of Ruins' sound. Amazingly, they've been at it for more than a decade, but show no signs of slowing down or changing musical course. Suffice it to say that *Pallaschtom* is an exhilarating, punishing and thoroughly exhausting musical experience. Locate this one immediately. This is Ruins at the top of their game.

New York's own **ROIR** records continues to issue some fascinating archive material from important artists who were generally misunderstood or ignored during their creative prime. The CD release of **The New York Dolls *Lipstick Killers*** is a worthwhile document capturing the band in its original incarnation, live in the studio. Although most of these tracks would end up on their immense major label debut a couple of years later, it's interesting to hear these early rough demos. Strangely, the band sounds positively mild on songs like "Bad Girl" and "Looking for A Kiss," which would later rage like a freighter careening off the rails. So, even though the songs themselves lack the vigor of later Dolls' recordings, I enjoy hearing this great band in its infancy, with original drummer, the late Billy Murcia, who would soon die of a heroin overdose. While *Lipstick Killers* is a real gift to Dolls fans, those who are new to the band should pick up both of their classic Mercury releases. Also out on ROIR is **James Chance and the Contortions' *White Cannibal***, capturing the band live in NYC during the early '80s. Although Chance was famous for his violent, confrontational performances, *White Cannibal* finds him focused on the music. With the able accompaniment of solid musicians, this line up of the Contortions seems downright smooth when compared to the mania of the early recordings found on *No New York*. Still, the physicality and urgency of Chance's music remains clearly evident throughout, as the group delivers tight versions of "I Got You, I Feel Good" and "Contort Yourself." For its time, this was very avant garde music, combining the raw Funk of James Brown with the brute force of Punk and the spontaneous frenzy of Free Jazz. While it doesn't sound as radical today, Chance's music, effectively represented by *White Cannibal*, remains tremendously influential.

Another misunderstood classic, **Lou Reed's** notorious ***Metal Machine Music*** has just been domestically issued for the first time on

CD through **Buddha Records.** Originally released in 1975, following commercial hits like *Rock n' Roll Animal* and *Sally Can't Dance*, Reed deliberately attempted commercial suicide by issuing a double album consisting of four sides of continuous, layered feedback. At the time, very few listeners viewed this as a serious piece of experimental music, and stores were soon flooded with returns. Twenty five years later, Noise is a musical genre and *Metal Machine Music* sounds tame next to anything by Merzbow or Masonna, but it still packs a potent punch. I can't say that I enjoy Reed's album, but I respect it. While artists like John Cage had recorded similarly extreme events long before the release of *Metal Machine Music*, no one had dared issue such material into the mainstream Rock market; no one other than The Velvet Underground, that is...If we look at Reed's early work, songs like the mind-numbing "Sister Ray" and "I Heard Her Call My Name", maybe *Metal Machine...* was just a natural progression. Buy it, turn it up, and scare the shit out of the neighbors.

While on the subject of strange shit, the strangest of reissues has just appeared: **Faust's** first two brilliant recordings, ***Faust*** and ***So Far*** presented on a single CD, courtesy of the wonderfully eclectic **Collector's Choice** label. Truly, Faust defies categorization; some call their music Kraut Rock, while others label it Progressive. Really, it is neither. Faust, like compatriots Can, were creating their own musical vocabulary in the early '70s, when these albums were first released. The debut LP was as bizarre as anything you're likely to encounter, a wild psychedelic excursion into musical dadaism, recalling bands like The Monks, The Mothers, and Reprise- era Fugs. *Faust* consisted of twisted, continually morphing sound experiments. Some sections were carefully structured, and performed in the basic Rock format, while others were completely experimental, blending electronics, found sounds and free improvisation. *So Far* was a much more sophisticated record, integrating trance inducing, pulsing percussives and elements of Folk and Jazz into the mix. While still singularly odd, Faust's new music was warmer, more rhythmic and melodic. Interspersed among these seemingly gentler, more conservative songs were terrifying interludes of darkness. I give Collector's Choice a lot of credit for releasing Faust in America, since the work is so very difficult, even by today's standards. Also issued from Collector's Choice are three indispensable reissues from the legendary **Electric Prunes,** each containing extra tracks. The debut, ***I Had Too Much to Dream Last Night*** remains a classic in the genre of '60s Garage Rock. As great as it is, the album doesn't really capture the band's own vision, but instead, that of producer Dave Hassinger who brought in outside writers to develop hit songs. Regardless, the title track ranks among the greatest songs of its decade. The second album, ***Underground***, mostly written by the Prunes themselves, was a much more fully realized vision of their twisted brand of funhouse psychedelia. Unfortunately, that album didn't sell so well, and thus for their third LP, ***Mass in F Minor,*** a new strategy was employed, producing their finest artistic achievement and one of the truly great moments in '60's Rock. Guided by arranger, orchestrator David Axelrod, the *Mass* would be sung entirely in Latin and embellished with horns and strings. The resulting album is truly a work of significant depth and beauty, but not really an Electric Prunes album. Outside musicians were brought in to play difficult charts, leaving very little work for the band members themselves. Really, *Mass in F Minor* is more a David Axelrod recording than anything else, but regardless, it's a landmark recording, a true classic. Another obscure treasure unearthed by the folks at Collector's Choice is **Mad River**, a 78 minute CD that features both of the band's long out of print, highly collectable LPs. Initially issued in the late '60s, the debut was a strangely dissonant, complex work of guitar driven psychedelia, recalling the sound of the more famous Quick Silver Messenger Service. Mad River's music, however, was a lot darker and more intricately composed. Perhaps the band would have been huge were it not for the truly odd, quavering lead vocals of singer Lawrence Hammond. Hearing this music some 32 years later, I'm amazed how fresh and innovative it still sounds. Imagine Pere Ubu's David Thomas as lead singer for Fu Manchu and you'll have some idea of Mad River's sound. The second album was an attempt to sell a few more records, since the first one didn't even enter the top 200; thus the group opted for a more listener friendly, countrified sound. Although there are some fine moments here, these songs pale when compared to those of Mad River's highly charged debut.

Without question, Chicago is the center of the "alternative" musical world right now, as it has been for the past couple of years. I am constantly amazed by the number of superior records that keep coming out of this city on a regular basis. **Drag City** and **Thrill Jockey** have both issued some highly recommended recordings over the past few months. From the former come the new **High Lamas'** CD, ***Buzzle Bee*** and **Movietone's** third album, ***The Blossom Filled Streets.*** Both are sophisticated, understated and deeply musical works, meticulously and subtly refined. *Buzzle Bee* continues in the tradition of past Lamas' recordings, with percolating analogue electronics interwoven within a delicate fabric of melody and texture. While the songs again recall classic influences like Van Dyke Parks, Brian Wilson and Martin Denny, so very tuneful and elegantly composed, the music is somewhat darker and less buoyant than past works. The move from V2, a major label, to Drag City has perhaps liberated the band, allowing them room to experiment a bit more. Fans of the group will find *Buzzle Bee* immensely enjoyable, but it is definitely the Lamas' most contemplative work to date. Movietone's new disc is a mature, deeply melancholy set of lovely, meditative songs, performed with subtle grace and delicacy. Whereas early works tended to be rougher and more blatantly experimental, *Blossom Filled Streets* focuses on precisely layered textures and solid composition, combining solemn lyrics and haunting melodies in a rich, warm musical framework. Like recent work by Flying Saucer Attack, Movietone gains power in its quietude. Movietone and High Lamas, both ironically from The UK, are making beautiful, timeless music, very much in keeping with the aesthetics of the ever understated, technically superior work that has recently been pouring out of The Windy City. Thrill Jockey, Drag City's main competitor, is a bit more eclectic, releasing wonderful new CDs from **The Sea and the Cake,** **Mouse on Mars,** and the long silent **Microstoria.** Native Chicagoans, The Sea and the Cake, a group consisting of some of that city's very finest players, have produced perhaps their richest, most fully realized work with the new CD, ***Oui.*** This delectable disc features 10 immaculately arranged songs that combine elements of Bosonova and Cool Jazz with their own eccentric, glisteningly melodic brand of pop. Each song is a finely polished, lushly textured musical gem, marked by a rare combination of technical perfection and intimacy. Certainly fans of great artists like Stereolab, High Lamas and Jim O'Rourke will deeply enjoy *Oui*, an album of considerable style and depth. Mouse on Mars' ***Instrumentals*** is actually a CD edition of a limited vinyl release issued in the late '90s. While almost all the group's work has been instrumental in nature, this disc represents their most somber set of electronic compositions. Unlike the wildly twisted, humorous work we have come to know and love, "Instrumentals" is a brooding, experimental release, closer in tone to a lot of the material coming from labels like Germany's Mille Pateaux. Most pieces unfold slowly, quietly, integrating fragments of melody and rhythm within sparse webs of electronic texture. Although *Instrumentals* is not Mouse on Mars' most entertaining work, it is perhaps their most difficult and is certainly a worthwhile addition to their catalogue. As one who no longer owns a turntable, I was most pleased to finally see this material available on CD. After a long absence, Microstoria return with their third release (excluding the remix disc...), the bafflingly titled ***Model 3, Step 2***. This duo, consisting of members of Mouse on Mars and German compatriots, **Oval**, create a very difficult brand of electronic music that sounds like a combination of both groups. Oval's wheezing, surreal miasma of digital decay is subtly integrated with the squiggling melodic fragments that characterize Mouse on Mars. While *Model 3* is an enjoyable listening experience, it doesn't cover new ground. But really, it doesn't have to, since these guys created the blueprint upon which so much modern electronic music is based.

While on the subject of new music from Chicago, let's not forget what is perhaps the best of the bunch, ***Pelo*** the exceptional new disc from **The Aluminum Group**, available from Hefty Records. On their fourth album, the brothers Navin are supported by an all star cast of Chicago's finest, including the ubiquitous John Mcentire, Doug McCombs, Sally Timms, Jeff Parker, and Rob Mazurek. The Aluminum Group have always proudly displayed their penchant for "Bacharachian" arrangements within their lushly melodic, meticulously composed songs, but "Pelo" adds some new twists. While the songs are as elaborately arranged as ever, incorporating a wide array of instrumentation and layered background vocals, the rhythmic foundations are much more abstract, blending sparse electronic beats with various acoustic percussives. Imagine a combination of Bacharach's orchestrated pop and Plaid's melodic electronica, and you'll have some slight idea of *Pelo*"s aesthetic leanings. All in all, The Aluminum Group prove themselves to be perhaps the most innovative pop ensemble in America. Like Apples in Stereo, High Lamas, Olivia Tremor Control, Jim O'Rourke and others who have so effectively combined elements of classic '60s pop within their singular musical visions, The Aluminum Group has delivered release of considerable substance and style.

New from **Mille Plateaux** is the highly anticipated second release, ***Stdiosnd Types***, from the fascinating UK duo, **SND.** Like Oval, Fennesz and other purveyors of minimalist electronics, SND exists on the outer perimeters of the modern avant garde. Although their work is extremely experimental, I find it entirely listenable and consistently engaging. SND combines sonic material from digital dumping grounds: all manner of ticks, clicks, and glitches (which have come to characterize a lot of modern electronica) with sparse shadows of rhythm and melody, recalling aspects of early Techno. The end result is a strange, disorienting hybrid that is at once inviting, almost soothing, yet challenging. The music of SND, marked by its alien textures and fragile beauty, is most alluring and highly recommended.

Finally out on **V2** UK are remastered versions of the **Associates** best and long unavailable albums, ***Fourth Drawer Down*** and ***Sulk.*** This English duo, featuring the inimitable vocals of the late, great Billy MacKenzie, never really made much of a dent in the US market, even though Sire records issued *Sulk* domestically in the early '80s. *Fourth Drawer* is a collection of four singles and moves into more experimental realms than that of the debut LP, the long out of print *Affectionate Punch*. While containing its share of fantastic keyboard driven pop songs, *Fourth Drawer* illustrates the darker more brooding leanings of this strange, unpredictable band. *Sulk* was a much gayer, flamboyant affair, combining new romantic stylistic trappings with the decadence of German cabaret. Here, MacKenzie's dramatic, highly charged vocals soar to new heights. Certainly, a singer as mannered and stylized as MacKenzie will evoke strong reaction, positive and negative. I've always loved his voice, and both of these albums are among my favorite from the Post-Punk period in the UK. Also available is the wonderful double disc set; ***Double Hipness***, a collection of demos, unreleased songs, live tracks and BBC recordings. The quality of most of this work is pretty outstanding. I was expecting a rough "odds and sods" collection directed to diehard fans, but this isn't the case at all. *Double Hipness* is packed with prime quality associates material from the period that spawned *Fourth Drawer* and *Sulk*. (Note: both *Fourth Drawer* and *Sulk* feature several bonus tracks and have been completely remastered).

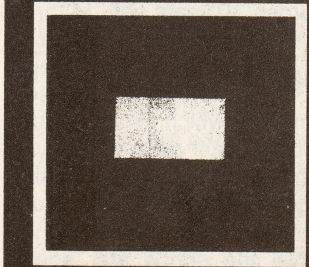
Fuel 2000 continues to re-release long out of print BBC recordings, some of which sell for $100 or more on eBay. One of these is the full-length **Joy Division** album. Fuel 2000 has added two bonus tracks and an with an interview with the late Ian Curtis, making this a necessary purchase for fans who already own the original version. Joy Division, like The Sex Pistols, Nirvana and very few others, created music borne out of sheer emotional turmoil and desperation, assuring their imminent self destruction. But they left a legacy of two beautiful, tragic and timeless albums that are as powerful today as they were 23 years ago. These live versions of classic Joy Division songs don't stray far from the originals, but still they are treasured remains of one of modern music's most tortured souls. Ironically, **New Order,** the world famous pop group responsible for such massive hits as "Bizarre Love Triangle", rose from the ashes of Joy Division. After Ian Curtis died it seemed as if the rest of the band was liberated to create happier, more commercially viable music. Although I've never been a great fan of New Order, I have enjoyed many of their ubiquitous dance tracks, some of which appear here. Their BBC set incorporates propulsive dance rhythms and sequences with aggressive guitars and throbbing bass lines. For the most part it rocks pretty hard. The highlight of the set, however, is the extended version of The Velvets' "Sister Ray", a song that Joy Division would often play in performance. Here the band sheds its new wave skin, slithering back to more tumultuous, noisier days.

It's hard to believe that it would take a Volkswagen commercial to bring the late, great Nick Drake the recognition he so rightly deserved while he was alive in the late '60s. Because of the overwhelming response to a recent advert in which Drake's music was used, **Hannibal Records** has remastered, repackaged and rereleased all three recordings, ***Five Leaves Left***, ***Bryter Later***, and ***Pink Moon.*** As I listen back to these beautiful, sad recordings, I can only wonder how Drake, only 26 when he died, could have created such deep, confessional music. The work sounds as if it was made by one who had lived long and hard. Although recorded 30 years ago, all three albums sound very modern. Artists like Mark Konzolek, Mark Eitzel and scores of other confessional "folk singers" have been deeply influenced by Drake's haunting work. "Five Leaves" is a sparsely arranged set of ten meditative songs, most of which simply feature Drake's smooth, melodic voice and acoustic guitar playing. A few of the songs are delicately orchestrated, enhancing the intimacy of this somber album. *Bryter Later*, while still quite serious in tone, is more varied, often presenting full band arrangements, some quicker tempos and more intrusive orchestration. While the songs are, again, consistently excellent, the album as a whole isn't as immediate as *Five Leaves*. Probably Drake felt much the same way, since his next and last LP, *Pink Moon* features only his vocals and acoustic guitar. *Pink Moon* is, without a doubt, the saddest and most haunting of the three, indicating Drake's further withdrawal from society and perhaps foreshadowing his early death. Remastered using 24 bit mapping, these reissues sound great. Also, Hannibal has restored all the original artwork, lyrics etc., and has added new photos and visuals.

Columbia / Legacy Records has recently issued some very worthwhile items. My favorite of the batch are the newly remastered versions of **Blood, Sweat, and Tears** first two albums. Their 1968 debut, ***Child is Father to the Man***, was an extraordinary, heartfelt work that combined aspects of Rock, Jazz, R&B, and Classical music into a new hybrid that some called "Jazz Rock". Such categorizations simply don't do justice to the recording's emotional and musical depth. Founded by Al Kooper following his departure from the Blues Project, this first formation of BST was a fairly eclectic, experimental ensemble that moved easily from the psychedelic classical weirdness of "The Overture" to the understated groove of "I Can't Quit Her". This, however, was not the Blood, Sweat, and Tears that would soon become a household name. After the debut, Kooper was kicked out of the group, and Jazz singer David Clayton Thomas entered as lead vocalist for the second, self-titled LP. This would prove to be the big one. Containing three massive hits: "Spinning Wheels", "And When I Die", and "You Made Me so Very Happy", the new formation of Blood, Sweat, and Tears was hugely successful. Personally, I like both records quite a bit; the first for its sheer beauty and innovation, and the second for its addictive melodies and soulful dynamics. Also just released on Legacy is **Electric Light Orchestra's** three CD box set, the aptly titled ***Flashback***, a remastered retrospective of the group's greatest hits, along with a number of alternate takes and previously unreleased songs. Created for ELO fans, this three and a half hour musical feast is accompanied by a 44 page color booklet featuring rare photos, extensive liner notes and track by track notes from Jeff Lynne himself. The first five ELO records gave me a lot of pleasure when I was in high school, before I heard The Ramones and The Pistols. After Punk exploded, all these seemingly pompous bands sounded very old and boring. Well guess what...Punk faded into oblivion, and today ELO sounds a lot more current than Eater, The Lurkers, The Drones or any one of a hundred third rate Punk bands. Indeed, pop music has gone full circle, and once again it is acceptable to declare ELO an influence...Just listen to all the orchestrated pop coming from indie labels today. Of course, I am partial to the first two CDs of the set, featuring highlights from first decade of the band's existence, but as a retrospective, ***Flashback*** attempts to present a balanced overview, so indeed, much of the later work is also included. If nothing else, ***Flashback*** makes it painfully clear that Lynne is a sorely underrated pop genius, right up there with the likes of John Lennon, Paul Mcartney, Brian Wilson, and that other often ignored savant, Roy Wood...

Yo La Tengo has recently released ***Danelectro***, an interesting EP featuring three brief instrumentals left off their last LP, along with remixed versions of each. The original mixes are quite gentle, in keeping with the hushed beauty of their recent output, sounding a bit like an instrumental version of the group Low. Delicately finger picked and subtly strummed guitar motifs are supported by understated, brushed percussives and ever so slightly pulsing bass tones. The remixes toughen up the sound considerably, particularly **Kit Clayton's** "Danelectro 3", with its distorted rhythms and fractured melodies; however it is **Nobukazu Takemura**'s 11 minute interpretation of "Danelectro 2" that is the highlight of this 28 minute disc. Takemura creates a strange, chattering musique concrete in the first section before slipping into saccharine electro melodies and increasingly jittery rhythms, finally ending the piece with mantric, droning loops that quietly fade away.

Two excellent and innovative titles are now available from **Mute** Records, **Holger Hiller** and **Kreidler**'s new self-titled CDs. Hiller is perhaps Germany's best kept secret, a brilliantly innovative musician who has quietly been issuing very challenging recordings for two decades. I can only hope that this new release brings him the recognition he deserves. Like past work, the new disc brings together highly experimental musique concrete with aspects of dance and industrial music, creating a carefully orchestrated, unpredictable sonic collage. Both Hiller and Kreidler's new works succeed because they incorporate electronic and acoustic elements within the song form. Each piece is tightly composed, each sound deliberately placed. Hiller effortlessly moves from subtle dance grooves to wheezing electronic interference before moving into some twisted little incantation. Indeed, this is disorienting, often difficult music that works on both a physical and cerebral level. Kreidler, also from Germany, creates much warmer, but equally eccentric music, reminding me of a combination of Can and Mouse on Mars, combining organic elements into an intricate web of texture and rhythm. Most of the songs maintain an underlying groove, but the sputtering, loopy rhythms and queasy melodies are all quite alien, illustrating Kreidler's very individualized musical approach. Much credit must be given to Mute for standing by a roster of artists that are truly taking music into the new millennium.



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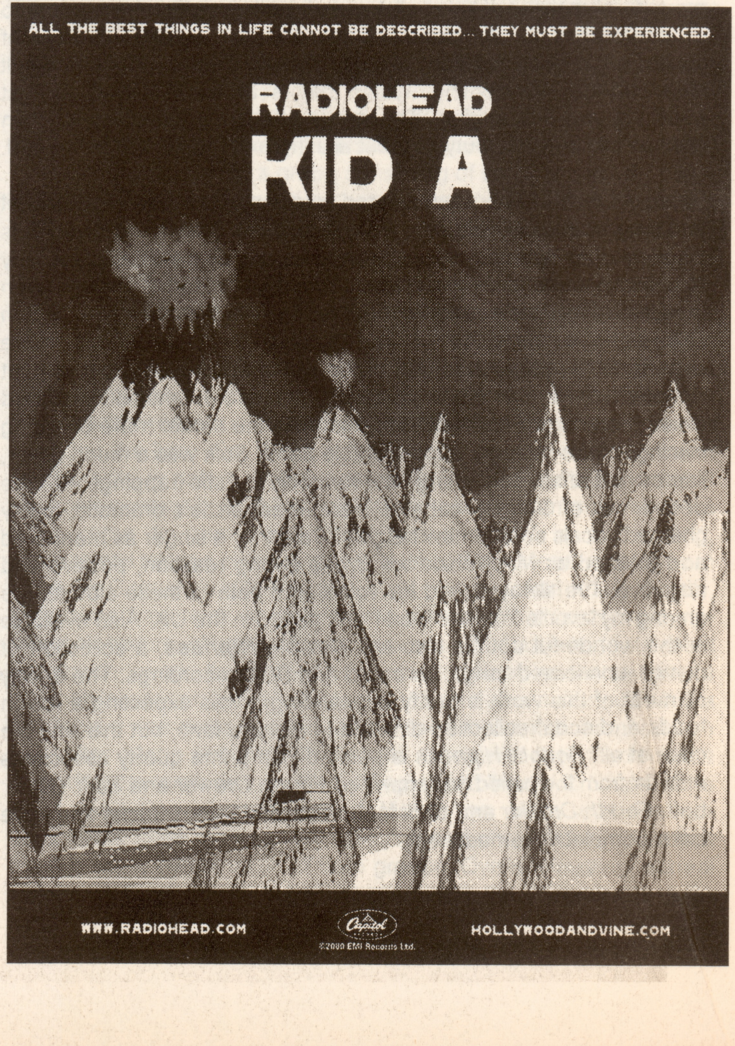

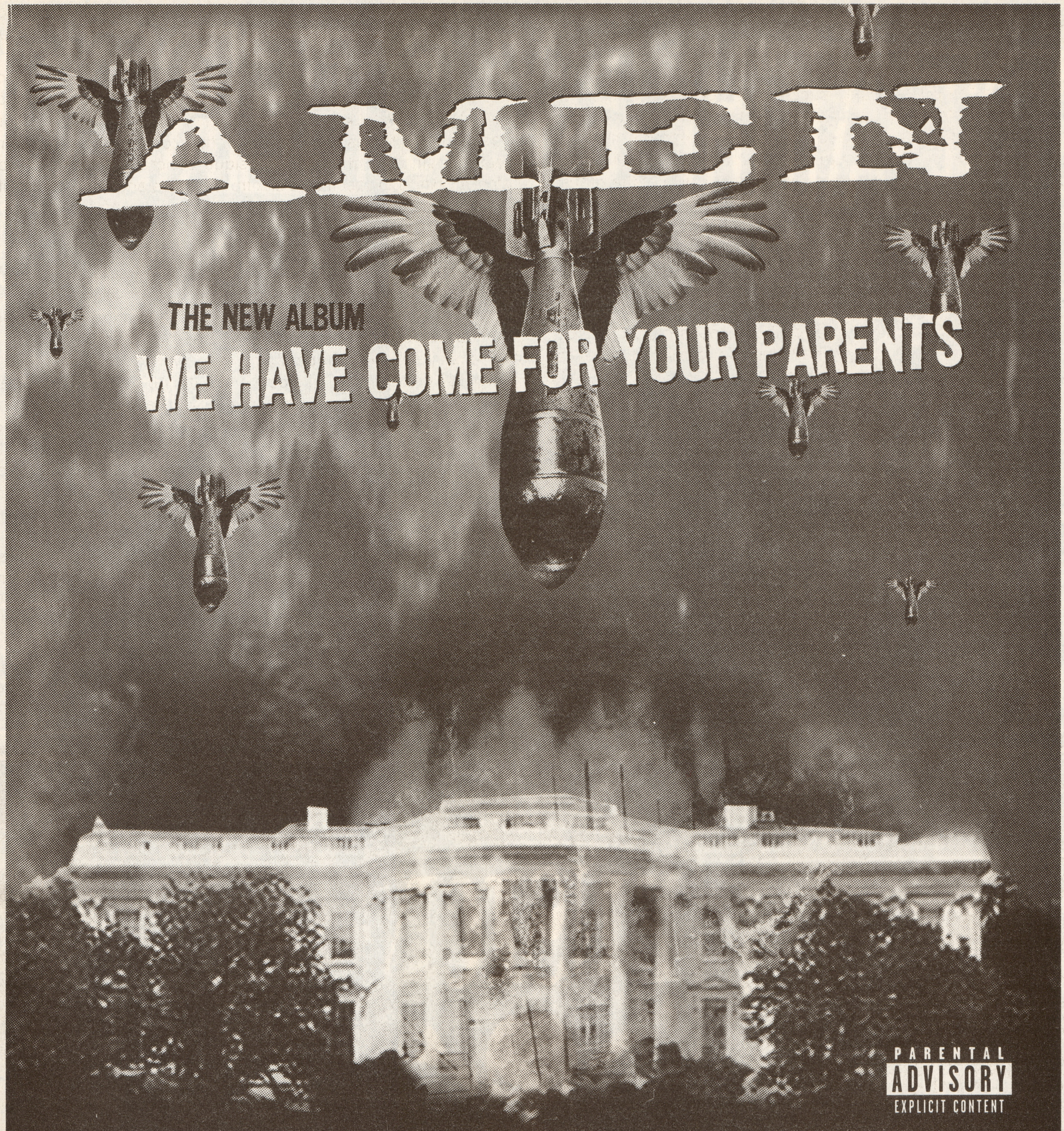
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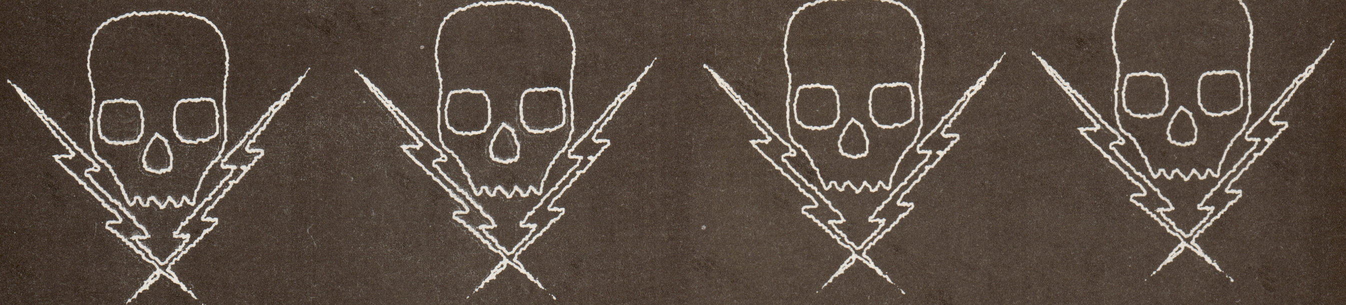

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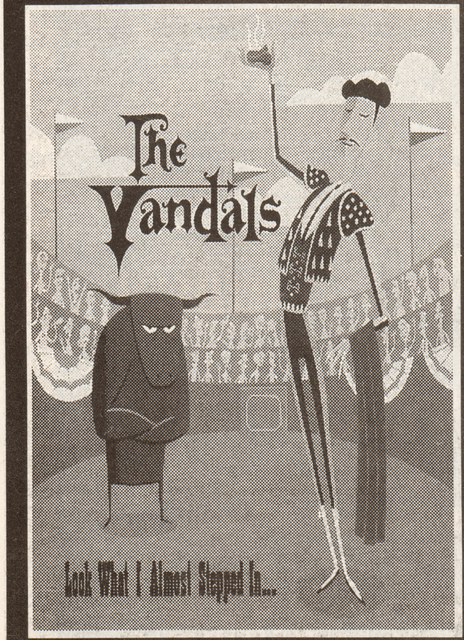
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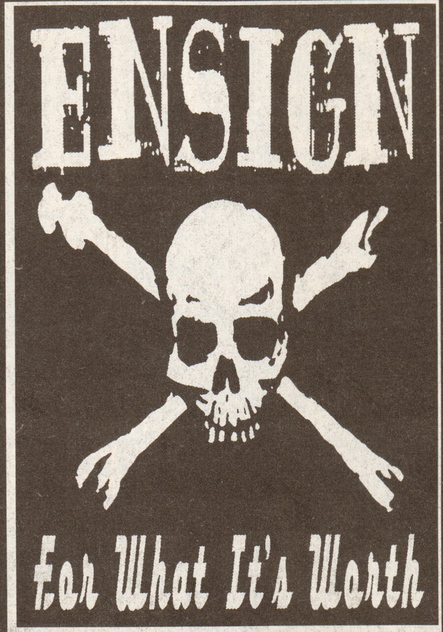
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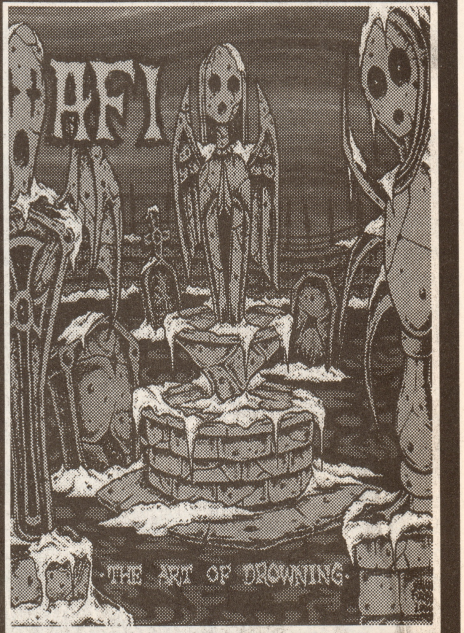
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Audio Reviews

7th Heaven "Face Time Replaces" *(NTD, POB 66473, Chicago, IL 60666).* 7th Heaven is one of those Rock bands that's bound to hit it big because everything they do is big. A big sound with big hooks ("War Machine") that's bound to draw some big attention ("You Lied"). On their 10 track disc, this Chicago quintet take a basic Rock premise and work it into a heavy yet not overpowering brand of New Rock, complete with drum machines, strong performances and excellent production. Kind of a harder edged Finger Eleven, 7th Heaven's main strength lies in how they can build a song and play with its dynamics to create some dramatic compositions ("Boom," "Lost"). If you like Orgy, Gravity Kills or danceable Hard Rock, check out 7th Heaven.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

A Planet For Texas "You Can Still Rock In America" *(Diaphragm, 2480 Indianola Ave., Columbus, OH 43202).* If you can still rock in America, be sure to tell these guys... No bad joke, that would be an easy dis for any college-bound critic, but *Under the Volcano* -- wait, I'm reviewing a CD, not now, Rich. Anyway, they're alright, they're what Southern Punk Rock used to sound like in the '80s but I give them full-cred for covering "Crimson and Clover.".. (CD)-**Darren**

Agent Orange "Greatest and Latest" "This, That -N- The Other Thing" *(Cleopatra, PMB 251, 13428 Maxella Ave., Marina Del Rey, CA 90292).* Great band. See review of *A Tribute To Nine Inch Nails.*(CD)-**Darren**

Alice Cooper "Brutal Planet" *(Spitfire, 101 Bay Ave., Hicksville, NY, 11801).* This is by far the heaviest album of Alice's 30 plus year career; it is also one of his darkest. Where in the past Alice has explored the "horror" of music, and even done some self-searching horror, this is much more frightening as he peers into the real world and its frights. Topics span from the daily nine to five grind, the daily waste of food by rich countries, and even a Columbine type scenario. There is some really nasty stuff in these lyrics, and I don't know that anything Cooper has done before can compare with these weighty issues. This is probably my favorite record since *Raise Your Fist And Yell*, and features everything that I would listen to Alice Cooper for. His voice is as good as it's ever been, and he continues to re-invent his persona to keep up with the times. The music is a little on the trendy side for someone who invented the "Shock Rock" genre to begin with, but you have to do something to get the kids listening. Still better than anything Marilyn Manson can muster up.(CD)-**Myk**

The Amazing Crowns "Royal" *(Time Bomb, 31652 2nd Ave., Laguna Beach, CA 92677).* So this band had to change their name BY LAW so people won't get them confused with Royal Crown Revue. Sure, why not? So we can remember who they were, they named their CD *Royal.* Someone at the label got a raise for that stroke of marketing genius, but basically this CD went through me. It's your standard Rock-a-billy with songs that Rock-a-billy people sing about. The Reverend Horton Heat does it much better, and more distinctively. The Amazing Crowns aren't bad, they just need something to stand out on their recordings.(CD)-**Jack**

Amber Asylum "TheSupernaturalParlourCollection" *(Release, POB 2060, Upper Darby, PA 19082).* I love Kris Force and Amber Asylum. There is nothing they have released that I didn't love. Each album has a different quality and a different approach. This album features a cover of "Black Sabbath" with female vocals, all played on string instruments. The song is seriously haunting. Once again, many of Amber's original works would be perfect for horror movie soundtracks, as they peak up and down with their light percussion and the cellos playing non-traditional tones. This is very atmospheric and soothing. Forget those natural sounds CDs for relaxation, this will do it just fine for you. Always worth checking out for the truly adventurous.(CD)-**Myk**

Amoeba "Pivot" *(Release, POB 2060, Upper Darby, PA 19082).* Robert Rich has been around forever. This is his second release under the Amoeba header for Release. He was also on the Extreme label from Australia, and the Hypnos label, amongst many others. Rich does a sort of folkish-electronica ambient project here. It has more vocals than his work is usually known for, but is very soothing nonetheless. There are lots of piano parts, as well as some interesting electronic percussion. This is a truly strange release even for the Release label. It's almost like an electronic Mamas and the Papas release. I could totally hear Mama Cass doing vocals over this whole act. One of the most relaxing and intricate albums Release has ever put out, but not at all for the power electronics fans that label usually attracts.(CD)-**Myk**

Amy Correia "Carnival Love" *(Capital, 1750 Vine St., Hollywood, CA 90028).* Here's what I'm imagining: Amy Correia is singing her songs of despair and lost love at some Thursday night open mic showcase, at some dingy little bar, in the East Village. Some A&R pundit thinks she is the "Folk Alanis Morrisette" and signs her. She has a hit or two and fades into obscurity, earning legendary status. Anyhow, she plays some guitar, mandolin, banjo, and some keyboards while slowly turning her poetry into depressing love ballads. The only thing I can compare it to would be Aimee Mann, except Aimee has a better voice. A soothing listen for rainy, Sunday morning hangovers.(CD)-**Corporate Whore**

Annalise "Tour Issue" *(Ding Dong Ditch, POB 2409, Kalamazoo, MI 49003-2409).* I was just reading about how these guys toured in Malaysia, which pretty much kicks ass. This was released to coincide with Annalise's tour of Japan and Australia. Their music is neither pissed off Punk Rock nor Emo/Hardcore, but lies somewhere in the middle. It's like Emo but with a Punk edge. The singer sings more like he's fed up with life rather than angry at it. "Selling Sand to the Arabs" is a cool tune about the punk scene and how punks are fighting about who's going to change the world first, Crass or The Exploited. Mmm...Crass? They close the album out by playing an acoustic version of that song, which is always a nice touch. This is for the college radio Punk Rock fans out there.(CD)-**Corporate Whore**

Antaeus "Cut Your Flesh and Worship Satan" *(Necropolis, POB 14815, Fremont, CA 94539).* This French quintet gives up their left nut for Satan, and you can tell by their album title, they ask just about the same from their audience. Maybe if their music didn't sound like it was recorded in a wind tunnel, their plea could be answered by a few wayward 14 year old boys in the Midwest somewhere. Otherwise, this disc is prime drink coaster material, but just make sure you scratch the title of the disc out so Mom and Dad don't get offended. Pure Death Metal drivel. Aaaaaarrrrghh.......(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Antisilence "Sufferhits" *(Hammer, Muhurdar Cad. Akmar Pas. 70/12 Kadikoy 81300 Istanbul, Turkey).* More Turkish Hardcore joy! These guys seem a little more radical than Radical Noise, by the looks of their propaganda in the CD insert and lyrics. For some reason they sound like *Slave to the Grind* era Skid Row mixed with Hatebreed and Sick of It All.(CD)-**Chris Munity**

Arab On Radar "Soak The Saddle" *(Skin Graft, POB 257546, Chicago, IL 60625). Soak The Saddle...* Hmmmm....sounds like the perfect title for a porno flick; and what the hell is an Arab On Radar? Maybe it's the clerk from your local 7-11 who *[Sorry, Alex...I couldn't keep that in.-**Rich**]*! In any case, this release is very strange. Arab On Radar dish out noisy blasts of distortion, noise and yep.... more noise. Imagine a bunch of chimpanzees banging away on musical instruments in a recording studio and you get the idea. Production is more raw then a rope of sausage dangling in a butcher shop window! The drummer sounds like he's banging on the lids of metallic garbage pails. *Soak The Saddle* is destined to become a cult classic. This is anti-music to the fullest degree. What more can you ask for from a band whose vocalist sounds like Gilbert Gottfried!?(CD)-**Alex**

Arson "Words Written In Blood" *(Resurrection AD, POB 763, Red Bank, NJ 07701).* Arson is a Death Metal Hardcore band from New Jersey that smokes from start to finish. On their five track disc, these guys go through a million breakdowns, about 38 blast beats and countless blood curdling screams that'll leave you deaf, speechless and overall completely drained ("Avoid the Sun"). Heavy, heavy music that borders on out and out chaos. Imagine the Grind of a Relapse band combined with some Death Metal musings and ultra tight Metalcore breakdowns ("Myth"). Oh, the guitarist is also in Rapcore outfit E-Town Concrete, in case you were keeping score at home. Pick it up and feel the power of Arson.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Arson "Less Perfect Than Death" *(Resurrection AD, POB 763, Red Bank, NJ 07701).* Arson is a Metal band that loves that double-bass drumming. This is a two song CD version of their new seven inch. This sounds like a cross between Slayer and Dillinger Escape Plan.(CD)-**Chris Munity**

As Friends Rust "An Anthology Of Short Fiction And Non-Fiction" *(Doghouse, POB 8946, Toledo, OH 43623).* What can I say? This reminds me of Dag Nasty *(Wig Out...* era) meets the Faction (80's Powell Perolta Skater Steve Caballero's band). Vocally, half the time this guy sounds just like Steve Caballero; I guess the other half the time he's screaming his nuts off. Musically, this is really catchy, melodic Hardcore. This one is highly recommended for all of our readers. But the question is... do we have any readers?(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

The Automatics "Murder Suicide" *(Just Add Water, POB 420661, San Francisco, CA 94142).* Ah yes, the Automatics, Punk Rock at its best. What is this, their 100th release or something? Automatics and J-Church seem to go for the record of having the most stuff out in punkland, and they just don't stop with the punk. If you don't know them by now, this is the Automatics CD to get. It's great punk record. Can I say "punk" anymore times? Punk, punk, punkity punk.(CD)-**Jack**

The Bananas "Forbidden Fruit" *(Plan-It-X, 5810 W. Willis Rd, Georgetown, IN 47122-9117).* Straight out of Sacramento comes The Bananas, who play poorly recorded Pop Punk. The vocals are a little harsh at times, and the first couple of songs sound like Jello Biafra is fronting the band. Musically, The Bananas rock like a muffled, lo-fi version of the Hi-Fives.(CD)-**Chris Munity**

Black Label Society "Stronger Then Death" *(Spitfire, 101 Bay Ave., Hicksville, NY 11801).* Black Label Society is former Ozzy Osbourne guitarist Zakk Wylde's very own band, and is surprisingly tight, catchy, and brutal as fuck. Most songs are highlighted by abrasive, crunchy powerchords, edgy guitar harmonics and solid vocals. Groove driven and laced with Black Sabbath flavorings, *Stronger Then Death* demonstrates Mr. Wylde's ever expanding fretwork talents. This disc is highly recommended for any metalhead who needs some good ole' ear candy to feast upon.(CD)-**Alex**

Black Heart Procession "Three" *(Touch and Go, POB 25342, Chicago, IL 60625).* Hailing from the west coast, where singer Pall had been in a member of 3 Mile Pilot (a Cargo Records band which is pretty well known). Black Heart Procession has a very dramatic sound, which heavily relies on piano, not unlike 3MP, but darker and mellower. Pall is a great vocalist for this eerie Pink Floyd meets Indie Rock band.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

The Blamed "Germany" *(Grrr, 920 W. Wilson Ave., Chicago, IL 60640).* This is pretty cool, four guys who look like they could either be in Weezer or film school, churning out some pretty good Youth Crew Hardcore/Punk. The third song, "Running Away Can Be An Ugly Thing," reminds me of an Avail tune. Otherwise, there are some cool breakdowns and power chord riffs. There are plenty of parts where the singer sings (he's got one of those scratchy Hardcore wails) and then the band chants. The songs are about taking revenge and shit but, call me crazy, The Blamed don't come across as meatheads. The last song has some sort of weird tribal horn or something, which sounds nice. And hey, it's not too long at only seven songs.(CD)-**Corporate Whore**

The Bobbyteens "Not So Sweet" *(Estrus, POB 2125, Bellingham, WA 98227).* Simplistic and cutesy Punk Pop by three gals and a drummer named Russell. If the Go-Go's were more topical and played faster, well, you get the drift... (CD)-**Darren**

Bowman "Believe" *(Bowman, 12-B Highland Ave, Arlington, MA 02476).* Billy Bowman, he's a good man with a lot of cred on the Boston scene. On his new record he did the majority of the instruments and vocals in addition to co-producing, so more power to the guy. File Bowman under "talented electric singer-songwriter in the Elliott Smith meets Roots Rock realm, with great songs, though nothing distinct"... (CD)-**Darren**

Buffalo Nickel "Buffalo Nickel" *(Universal, uhhh upper west side?).* Easy review. This is, quite possibly, the biggest piece of shit ever recorded. It's Soft Rock/Country Rock/Schlock Rock Bullshit. It's boring, slow, lacking of balls, and contains absolutely no redeeming social value. Think of watered down, third rate, John Mellancamp crossed with Garth Brooks or some shit. The best part about it,

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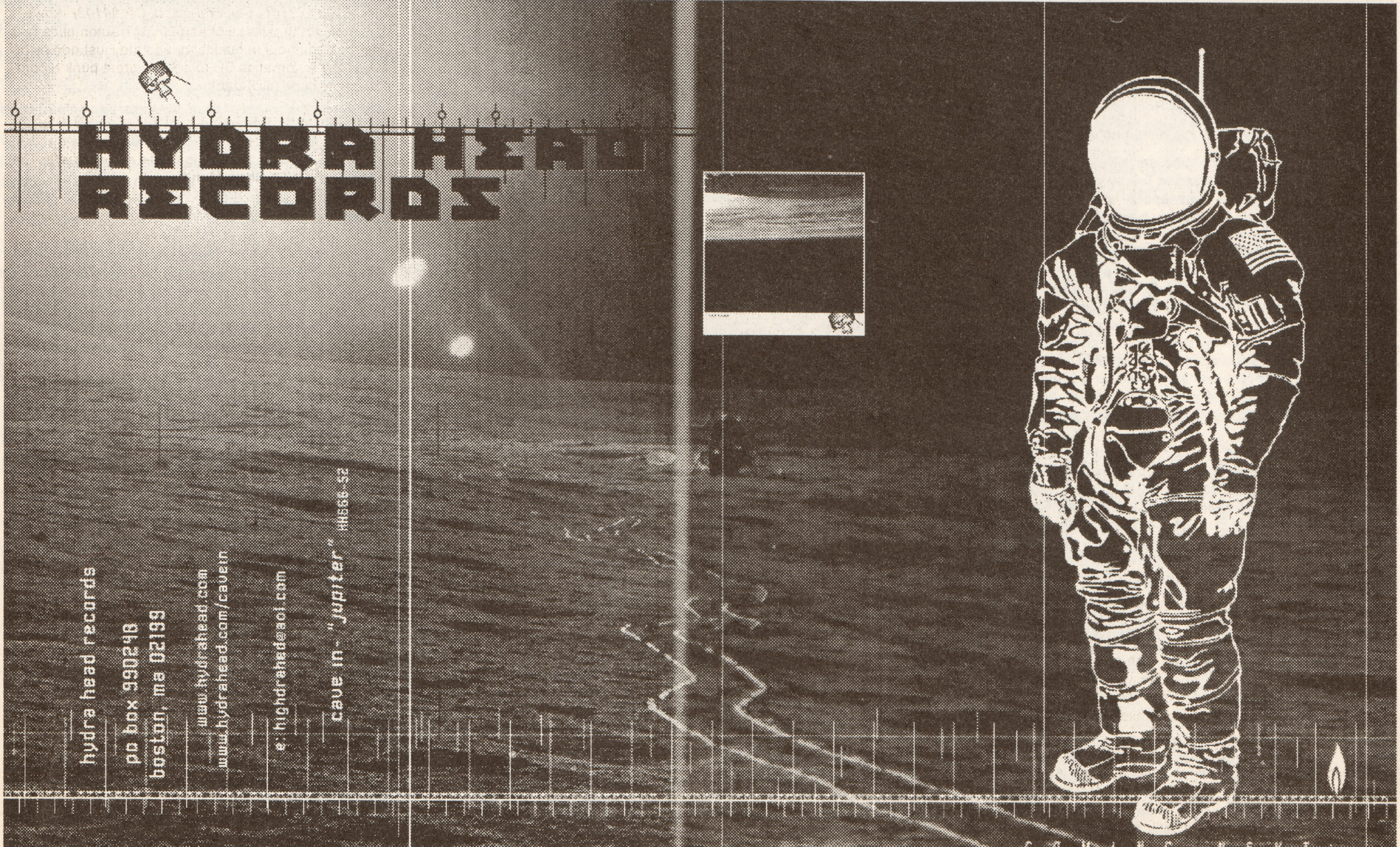
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is the fact that my copy skips! I even went to the website to check 'em out and my computer shut down...TWICE!! Oh yeah, it's on the same label that endorses Kathy Lee Gifford. You decide.(CD)-**Corporate Whore**

Bunker Soldier "Innuendo" *(Neo Cultural Front, POB 612243, Dallas, TX 75261).* The only thing worse than listening to this CD would be sliding down a razor blade and landing in a puddle of rubbing alcohol, or maybe getting naked, doused in honey, and then trying to have sex with a beehive! Bunker Soldier is one of the worst electronic/Industrial bands in existence. Why? *Innuendo* features virtually no hooks, horrible production, a vocalist who sounds like he's got pickles in his nose, and samples which could've been lifted by a four-year-old. If the thought of a third rate KMFDM on heroin excites you, snatch this sucker up.(CD)-**Alex**

Burn It Down "Let The Dead Bury The Dead" *(Escape Artist, POB 472, Downingtown, PA 19335).* Here is a band to really look forward to. A superb mix of '80's Thrash and the current wave of Metalcore Hardcore bands. The vocalist borrows most apparently from the Tim Singer school of screaming, but there are hints of the early Metal days. There is a real interesting, heavy cover of the Rolling Stones "Paint It Black" thrown in the mix, for pure obscurity I think. Mixed into this heaping mess of violence is a well-conceived understanding of Post-Hardcore Emo stuff like Into Another and Lifetime permeates the breakdowns giving a true swing in the tempo of the music. There are even times in this piece that I think I hear parts of Yuppicide songs. There is no denying that the premier part of this band is their ability to write and play blisteringly heavy songs. What makes them better than many of the others is their ability to **not** play heavy. As always, Escape Artist scores with this powerful release, proving again that between them and Hydra Head, there may be no better.(CD)-**Myk**

Burn Witch Burn *(Razler, 2300 Walnut St., #612, Philadelphia, PA 19103).* Okay, this band BWB features Rodney Anonymous from the Dead Milkmen, as well as his wife. The sleeve says that they "express sad and joyous moods with exotic and mystic sounds." Yeah, that's true. They incorporate violin, mandolin, melodeon, and a bouzouki (?) to create an eclectic mesh of deranged Folk music. Then at times they get really dark, alternating male/female vocals. There's a cover of the Stones' "Citadel." There's a lot going on with this one. The lyrics are on the dark/evil side with mentions of the Parish Church, God, Led Zeppelin, and even SoHo. It sounds like music from near the Mediterranean, hundreds of years ago. A few songs sound like Irish drinking songs, but with darker lyrics. If you're reading the *Odyssey* and need a break, pop this on.(CD)-**Corporate Whore**

Burning Heads "Escape" *(Victory, 346 North Justine, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607).* This was a hell of a surprise. The name Burning Heads alone turned me off, and I also wasn't keen on the Kyle Baker-esque cover art. But then I slipped the disc in the player and was shocked to hear a band that was equal parts Down By Law, Uniform Choice, Dag Nasty, and has a little Ska thrown in for originality. This is your classic example of the DC/CA sound Hardcore. They even do an Adolescents cover. My favorite song by far is "SOS;" it has this really catchy chorus that sticks in your head forever. There are very few bands that could be big today that don't have wishy washy lyrics. These guys still have some meaning and seeming integrity. If you give them the chance, this will be your favorite surprise in recent memory. I think even that California snob Marc Lopez will like this record.(CD)-**Myk**

Cadillac Blindside "Read the Book, Seen the Movie" *(Soda Jerk, POB 4056, Boulder, CO 80306).* Ultimate Fakebook always talked about these guys in interviews, and surprisingly, they're completely worth your time. While most groups with two guitars have one serve as a barely-heard rhythm and the other an overbearing lead, Cadillac Blindside has two great and normally-functioning guitarists. A lot like Aviso Hara.(CD)-**Darren**

The Candy Snatchers "Color Me Blood Red" *(Black Lung, POB 3692, Morgantown, WV 26503).* Does this need to be discussed? Side A is the Snatchers live at the Fireside Bowl in Chicago, and side B is a collection of outtakes and 7"s. Naturally, it fucking smokes. They open the live set with "No Time To Waste," and continue with a slew of *Human Zoo!* tracks like "Killin' My Buzz." The *30 Grams to Life* 7" is also on here, with Iggy's "Fresh Rag" following. Larry even dedicates "I'm A Bastard" to his "dear ole dad." How nice. If ya like Punk Rock ya should own this. It's that simple. It's limited edition to 500 copies on red -- sorry Spag -- **blood red** vinyl.(12")-**Corporate Whore**

Cannibal Corpse "Live Cannibalism" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St., PMB 208, Simi Valley, CA 93065).* Eighteen tracks recorded live by possibly the most recognized name in Death Metal. Five tracks were recorded in Indianapolis, and 13 tracks were recorded at (gasp) the Death Metal Massacre in Milwaukee. Now, if you have ever had the displeasure of trying to listen to a band at the Eagles Ballroom in Milwaukee you know why I cringe. It is possibly the worst place for a band to play, at that includes the bathroom. Horrible echoes, no soundproofing, and walls made of pure concrete. There is no worse condition to try and play, or listen to, music anywhere. That is what you face, so the prospect of recording live Death Metal there is a total turn off. Well, somehow they managed top pull it off. There are no horrendous echoes, all the instruments are present and even the vocals sound strong. It is a testament to the will of the recording crew that managed to capture this, not to mention the band that managed to stay this tight in such circumstances. It is a live album that spans the entire life of the band and also captures the fury they often posses live. Not to mention, it features the best work Vincent Locke has ever concocted for a Cannibal record. If you like CC to any degree this is a total score. If you're not sure you like their music, but have heard it, this may push you over the edge as it has a fury that no studio album of theirs has ever captured.(CD)-**Myk**

Carnal Forge "Firedemon" *(Century Media, 1453-A 14th St. #324, Santa Monica, CA 90404).* For the first time Carnal Forge releases an album as a full-fledged member of the Century Media family. The debut record was licensed from the WAR label on Relapse, and made one hell of a splash. Now they return with a new bass player and a ton of attitude. Carnal Forge prove to all why they were snatched up from the small level Euro underground and brought worldwide. The vocals border on something you'd hear on a Dimmu Borgir record or from the vocalist from Witchery. The drums are so precise, I wouldn't be surprised if he out timed the metronome. The guitars are powerful in the mix, really kicking out the Swedish Death Metal sound, but they are not overdone. They are fast when they need to be, and they can slow down to a crawl at times when it is needed. New bass player Petri has no problem keeping up with the rest of the gang speed-wise, and he has a really powerful sound, not to mention he is more than proficient enough to keep up with the ultra fast riff changes. Most of the members of Carnal Forge are in other bands, which is kind of sick. I can only dream of what they would come up with if they didn't write songs for other bands.(CD)-**Myk**

Catch 22 "Alone In A Crowd" *(Victory, POB 146546, Chicago, IL 60614).* Catch 22 is a fun loving Ska Punk band from New Jersey with a second release full of bouncy, horn-flavored Punk tunes that will have you bobbing your head ("Arm To Arm," "Wreck of Sloop John B"). Touching on the Ska side of the fence, Catch 22 also has a firm sense of Hardcore and Punk in their arsenal, and they're not afraid to bring it out either ("Hard To Impress"). While there's nothing that stands out that would make this CD essential, it's definitely worth a spin if you need a lift from a bad day, or if you'd like to turn off the world and have a good time for a while. If you dig Ska and Punk, and would like to hear a passionate interpretation of it, check out Catch 22's latest.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

The Chandler Travis Philharmonic "Let's Have A Pancake" *(Sonic Trout, POB 113, Eastham, MA 02642).* It takes just a few seconds of the first track "That's What She Said" to realize this is not like anything you've probably ever heard. Yup, The Chandler Travis Philharmonic is out there, but thankfully, they're only harmful to themselves and a joy to everyone else. On their 11 track menagerie of sound and fury, this Massachusetts alterna-dixieland-big band ensemble sounds like Harry Connick meet the Police with a Punk Rock attitude ("What'll It Be"). Their usage of every instrument under the sun gives them such a well rounded, balanced and FUN sound that it's hard not to imagine yourself in a smoky club sipping margaritas tapping your toes to these folks as they wail into the night ("Nature Boy"). Kinda funky, Ska-esque, jazzy and overall some of the best damn party music you could possibly throw on to get your party pumping ("Crab Napkin"). Do yourself a favor and grab some of this flavor.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

The Churchills "You Are Here" *(Universal, 1755 Broadway, New York, NY 10019).* I went to this band's website and all they do is boast about how eclectic and diverse their music is. Lame. Their music is overproduced, radio friendly, pop crap. The guitar hooks are bland, the drums are overly weak, and this guy's voice is totally annoying. One of their songs, I think "Beautiful," was even on *Spin City*. At times, it even sounds like they're trying to imitate the Beatles. My friend Nick just walked in and said "..is this Nine Days?" Except The Churchills have a female vocalist as well. Like church, The Churchills will probably be infiltrating your ears with their crap soon enough.(CD)-**Corporate Whore**

Close Call "Too Close" *(Espo, POB 63, Allston, MA 02134).* Boston's own Close Call deliver six typical Hardcore anthems that display tight musicianship but no originality. Fans of Orange 9mm and that style would be into this.(CD)-**Chris Munity**

Compression *(Chord, POB 15793, Philadelphia, PA 19103).* This disc finds Compression dishing out atmospheric, progressive Hardcore laced with traces of Metal. This Maryland based group sounds like a cross between Hatebreed, Godflesh and early Clutch. Mosh happy chords and thunderous beats dominate much of this disc, however Compression injects trippy six string effects and dark, echoey vocals into the picture. Overall, if you love doin' time in the pit, this CD is custom made for you.(CD)-**Alex**

Corrosion of Conformity "America's Volume Dealer" *(Sanctuary, 1540 Broadway, New York, NY 10036).* Ah, the ever changing face of COC. While it's been a long time since their musically delightful yet commercially disappointing *Wiseblood* hit, the North Carolina quartet hasn't lost a step since their departure from Columbia Records. In fact, on their latest release, the 11 tracks actually show Pepper and the boys taking some retro pills and falling back into the '70's Southern Rock mode that they've been busy priming on their previous releases. Rest assured folks, that there are some hard rocking numbers here to satisfy the consummate fan ("Gittin' It On," "Congratulations Song"), yet the balance of AVD is an attempt to recreate those lazy and oh so hazy days of Southern yore. Mimicking their good buddies Metallica, COC strips down to bare bones and goes for the hook rather than the length this time around, with great impact ("Who's Got The Fire"). But, these guys truly shine when they can go off and pound a groove into the ground, then bring it back home with soul and depth ("Doublewide"). If you're looking for *Technocracy*, look elsewhere. But, if you're looking for some southern Metal that mixes the best of both ZZ Top and Metallica, then check out the latest from COC.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Cradle Of Filth "Midian" *(Koch, 740 Broadway, New York, NY 10003).* Cradle returns with their first release in a couple of years, excluding the EP that came out through Metal Blade. This is the first disc in a licensing deal between Koch and Music For Nations for (finally!) distribution in the States. Eleven new tracks from the vampire kings of Black Metal. There is plenty of keyboards, just as the last few releases have promised. Where the last few albums have been exclusively the high pitched vocals Dani is so well known for, *Midian* is more a return to the lower, more growling vox. I think this makes the band sound more dynamic, and is a vast improvement. New drummer Adrian (ex-At The Gates) has done one hell of a job replacing the departed Nick Barker, who is now in Dimmu Borgir. There is a return by two original members as well. Paul, who played on the demo and first album then left, and Robin, who has always been in the band. It also marks the return of Gian, who has been a part-time member since 1996. Many of the songs on *Midian* are slower than on the previous couple of albums, but the song writing is far more over the top, with subject matter about famous female mythological characters and their recorded abominations. In this vein, the band recruited Doug Bradley, aka Pinhead from *Hellraiser*, to do the narration on track four, "Death Magick For Adepts." There is nothing so different on this record that could be classified as surprising. Cradle has made a career of doing this kind of music, and they are good at it.(CD)-**Myk**

Crowbar "Equilibrium" *(Spitfire, 101 Bay Ave., Hicksville, NY 11801).* Louisiana's Crowbar have been around for nearly 10 years and has been specializing in sludgy, moshy and emotion fueled crunch metal for quite sometime. *Equilibrium* excels thanks to a load of pummeling drumwork, muscular chords and those trademark deep, bellowing vocals which yearn for your attention. As always, the vocalist sounds tortured and miserable with life. Best cuts include "Command Of Myself," "To Touch the Hand Of God" and a bizarre cover of that '70's classic "Dreamweaver." This is essential listening for any Crowbar fanatic.(CD)-**Alex**

Crowbar "Equilibrium" *(Spitfire, 101 Bay Ave., Hicksville, NY, 11801).* Crowbar returns with another release full of their swampy guitars and growling vocals. They continue to ride that same sound that gave them a brief dash of fame in the late '80's or early '90's (I don't exactly remember when their first full-length came out). Lots of emphasis on the heavy and lots of emphasis on groove make this a high-powered album. Sort of like a really heavy Alice In Chains, but groovier. A must for fans of that New Orleans sound that spawned EyeHateGod, Down, and Pantera. I couldn't in good faith classify this Stoner Rock, as there is a lot more going on than that. It transcends that genre, just as Monster Magnet has managed to do. The real difference between those two bands styles is the much heavier vocals stylings of Crowbar. Something I believe it attracts me to them more than MM. It's like two different sides of the moon, and to quote a bad cliché, if Monster Magnet is the brighter side than this must be the Dark Side of the Moon. It's one dang and dingy place with a lot of heavy heart and groove.(CD)-**Myk**

The Cult "Rare Cult" *(Beggars Banquet, 580 Broadway, Suite 1004, New York, NY 10012* The Cult have never gotten the respect they deserve considering how many bands they've influenced and have overall been ripped off by. It's good to see that they're finally getting their due to an extent. Though their label didn't send me the entire seven CD set -- stingy bastards, how can I rate a full album off a sampler? -- opting to give a "best of" rarities on a single disc. Regardless, this is all fine and dandy as far as rarities compilations go.(CD)-**Darren**

David Fesette *(David Fesette Music, 1677 Prospect Ave., Plainfield, NJ 07060).* What we have here are three acoustic tracks from some dude up in Jersey. I mean there is some light drumming going on with some bass, but the songs are slow acoustic numbers, kind of the way MTV used to do *Unplugged*. All the songs are about some lost love, and all are quite unappealing. You can tell that David worked hard on getting his voice to sound good, but...he doesn't have a good voice. Sorry, guy. Shit, he sounds like he used to front one of the Seattle scene's fourth string bands. The third song

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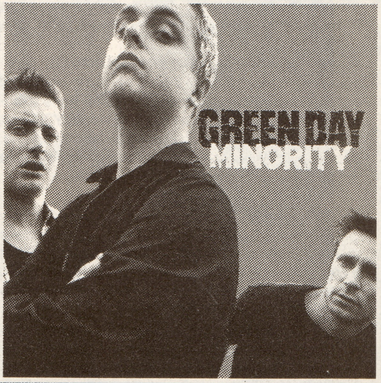

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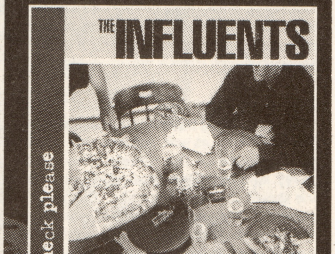

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sounds like that dick from Creed. Wait, now he's soloing off with an electric guitar. Oh wait, the cover art is of him making love to a guitar/woman: that's hysterical!(CD)-**Corporate Whore**

Death On Wednesday "Buying The Lie",*(Sidecho, 1223 Wilshire Blvd. #560, Santa Monica, CA 90403)*. This album starts off with a "HERE WE GO" scream a la Perry Farell on "Stop." I think it's a tribute to him, actually. These guys sound nothing like Jane's though. They play some midtempo, melodic Punk Rock. I know, it sounds cliched, but that's what it is. The singer sounds like he's into a different kind of music than the other guys; they seem to be doing the California thing, as he seems to be experimenting a bit more. As the album progresses, he pulls some out some weird voice from the '50s or something. The song "Dream" opens up sounding like that old tune, "Earth Angel," which is kinda cool. While not a must own by any means, it's not that bad, either.(CD)-**Corporate Whore**

Decapitated "Winds of Creation" *(Wicked World, POB 144 Nottingham, NG3 4GE United Kingdom)*. Decapitated is a very young Death Metal outfit from Poland who prove that they are indeed true Metal Jedi's on their nine song opus. Learning from all that are heavy, from the fusion of Candiria to the power of fellow countrymen Vader, Decapitated's disc is a Death Metaller's wet dream ("The Eye of Horus"). Blast beats run throughout lightning fast riffs and guttural screams that'd make Barney of Napalm Death a proud man ("Blessed"). If this is any indication of what these young 'uns can do, then we're in for a lot of great Death Metal from Eastern Europe is the future.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Destruction "Sentence Of Death"/"Infernal Overkill" *(SPV, 344 Dutch Neck Rd, POB 360, East Windsor, NJ 08520)*. This is what it's all about...fast and nasty without worrying about what everybody else thinks. These two records are presented on one CD, which is a devastating collection of music. This is German Speed Metal at it's all time best. *Sentence* was an EP originally released in 1984 and *Infernal* was the band's first full-length. For a time that boasted the recording prowess of Bathory (you know what I'm talking about if you've heard the first record) the quality and strength of these recording is outstanding. The mix is a little tinny, but I think that lends to the ambience. The vocals are nasty and rough, but not as abrasive as Quarthon. This is where you find the debut of the "Mad Butcher" and the true "Thrash Attack." There are so many things right about this disc and this band, this can only go in that select collection known as the desert island discs. For any fan of things fast with a big fuck you attitude, it's all here. These guys helped inspire an entire movement, and this is the disc that will help you find out how. First time available domestically after all these years!(CD)-**Myk**

Deviate "State of Grace" *(Too Damn Hype, POB 15793, Philadelphia, PA 19103)*. Deviate is a brutal East Coast quintet that takes the tough guy sound of Hardcore and adds tight breakdowns and group chorus screaming to create a maelstrom of sound suitable for snapping necks. Their 13 track release is chock full of aggression and is potent enough to create a mosh pit in a nursing home ("Stepped Off," "Burned Out"). Solid rhythms a la Hatebreed complement the Metalcore guitar work ("Circle of Friends") and the over the top vocals that put Deviate in fine company among NYHC's finest. If you dig the sounds of Hardcore from the East Coast, then Deviate is something to look into.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Dewey Defeats Truman "B-Sides, Rarities and Out-takes" *(Silver Girl, POB 161024, San Diego, CA 92176)*. Very Promise Ring sounding, but without the bounce. I could almost like this, but with that lack of energy this lacks a well-needed oomph. Or, as our publisher, Rich says, "Can you fuck to it?" No.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Dilan Dog "Standing Alone" *(dilandogpunk@hotmail.com)*. Dilan Dog is a brash Canadian Pop Punk outfit whose five song CD would fit in quite nicely in a new John Hughes movie or in any teenage romance movie soundtrack. Their gritty guitar work meshes well with the group vocals and overall bounce of their candy coated Punk ("Looking Through The Eyes"). Even the ultra sappy ballad works here ("I Would Learn How To...), despite its Bad English gone wrong tendencies. Inspired and well produced, this is a good start for a young band to start climbing the ranks. If you like Blink 182 or Face To Face or hell, any California Punk band these days, you'll be sure to dig the din these boys from up North make.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Dirty Walt and the Columbus Sanitation "To Put It Bluntly" *(Triple X, POB 862529, Los Angeles, CA 90086)*. Like some stanky-ass Funk? Well, look no further than Dirty Walt and The Columbus Sanitation. Taking musical influence from George Clinton and P-Funk, and lyrical content from the *Friday* movies series to Red Foxx, these guys have got a bad case of the funk. Yeah, they curse a lot, sing about getting high, getting laid and drinking liquor, but hey, Dirty Walt does it tastefully...well, not really, but it is funny as hell. Backed by some members of Fishbone, this CD is ass groovalicious, and despite its lack of intelligence, it is a FUN disc suitable for your next house party/smokeout.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Discipline "Nice Boys Finish Last" *(Too Damn Hype, POB 15793, Philadelphia, PA 19103)*. These guys play a cross between AF Hardcore and Oi! music. Well, there are Oi! chants. Ohhh, some Punk Rock in the mix as well. Actually, they chant a lot of stuff including "Come On," "Memories," and "This Is The Sound Of The Streets." Hey, a song about me! About a guy who drinks his life and miseries away, and how Discipline won't pity him. Shucks! Then there is unity: "Hardcore, skins, and thugs, we should all unite -- Together." Bukowski would have been jealous. It gets better! "Skinheads on the rampage, fighting in the street, earning some respect...." These guys are tough, have lots of pride, fought against the world, and aren't taking prisoners. I thought I led an exciting life! Well, it is winter, something has to be used to get the fireplace a going.(CD)-**Corporate Whore**

Downpore "Just A Game" *(POB 140556, Howard Beach, NY 11414)*. Downpore is a Queens, New York band that's been making waves and turning heads as of late. With their new six song release currently hitting the streets, this quartet takes the intensity of Tool and implements some Post-Hardcore tinges a la Quicksand and Helmet to create melodic mood pieces that stand head and shoulders over the weak radio friendly Rap Rock currently infiltrating the airwaves ("Branded"). Rhythmically sound and blazon with head banging riffs ("Inches Away"), Downpore keep an aura of suspense in their music the way a great author keeps you involved in a great novel. By putting together interesting twists and knowing when to reach the crescendo ("Seamless"), Downpore never goes for top speed, nor do they overpower you. Instead, they aim (and are successful), in overcoming the listener and grabbing their full attention span. Check these guys out if you like your music intense and heavy but not stupid or played out.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Dreams Of Damnation "Let the Violence Begin" *(Necropolis, 136 Lawrence St., Ste 3A, Brooklyn, NY 11201)*. Dreams is a new band founded by former Dark Angel guitarist Jim Durkin. Why would you care? Well if you were a DA fan you just do. Dreams features the same riff styling of the old Dark Angel thrash days. DOD are much more though. They are much heavier while maintaining the speed. The vocals are much more harsh and the drums are much faster. The drummer is the weak link of this band; he is mixed a little too far down. He at times seems to struggle just a bit to keep up with that speed, and the recorded sound is bad -- really over produced giving the drums a horrible fake sound. It really sounds like it's all snare and the cymbals repeatedly, together. Very noisy. This is a long EP, six songs in about 25 minutes time. This is a good first effort, especially track four, "Demonic Celebration," which truly shows the band has promise.(CD)-**Myk**

Dreams of Damnation "Let the Violence Begin" *(Necropolis, POB 14815, Fremont, CA 94539)*. Dreams of Damnation is a straight up Thrash Metal band with a pounding six song disc that will leave you gasping for air. Formed by former Dark Angel guitarist Jim Durkin, DOD takes the late '80's Thrash Metal sound and dust them off for another run. The results are surprisingly good, as their six stringed guitar assault sounds as fresh as a nu Metal band's ("Cremation Day") and their overall sound is very similar to Fear Factory without the technology. Reminiscent of such bands as Prong and early Sepultura ("Demonic Celebration"), DOD should please the Metal fan that has lost faith in the current Rap Metal and pretty boy scene. Pick it up and get bludgeoned.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Dub Club *(bill@fatnet.net)*. Dub Club seems like a DJ's delight, as they spin a whole host of beats underneath every type of music under the sun. From a Country-Reggae twang ("Linda Mar Dub") to a Spanish guitar flavored number ("Conquistador"), this dynamic duo cover all bases to keep the party grooving ("Do Nothing"). With the jazzy flavor that encompasses the entire collection, Dub Club even goes that extra mile to include the tres chic French vocal overdubs to create that loungy ambient feel. If you like to turn your brain off and the beats up, then this is the disc for you.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Dying Fetus "Destroy the Opposition" *(Relapse, POB 2060, Upper Darby, PA 19092)*. Dying Fetus may have an offensive name, but they are quite possibly the tightest and most head pounding assaulters out on the extreme Metal scene today. Even with their heaviness beyond a shadow of a doubt, these Mid-Atlantic Death Metal beasts still have enough where with all to throw in some memorable hooks into the fray ("epidemic Of Hate") a la Obituary. On DF's latest eight song offering, this disc finds the band sounding as sick as the album title implies, with just the right amount of Death, Grind and Thrash balanced out to create a truly momentous moshing experience. Check this out, fellow Death Metallers, and witness the carnage firsthand.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Elliot "False Cathedrals" *(Revelation, POB 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232)*. When I first heard this second full-length from these guys I was disappointed, but I don't think I was in the right frame of mind to listen to it. I popped this in a second time on a 60-mile drive to the countryside of western New York and found this disc amazing. With the addition of piano (were there piano tracks on the last one? I'm too lazy to check and to flaky to remember right now) and a singer who is very difficult to understand, (ala SDRE), you have to follow along with the lyric sheet. The growth of dynamics between the last two albums is tremendous. The first two songs both start out mellow and bass driven, then develop into thick melodic anthems. I found most of this album difficult to stop listening to, but in the middle of the disc, I found a few tracks that sort of bored me. Fans of the first Antarctica disc will really like this.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Elliott "False Cathedrals" *(Revelation, POB 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615)*. There was a time in my life that when I went to the record store and checked out the Punk/Hardcore section, and I bought anything new on Revelation. I was introduced to great bands that are still dear to me like Into Another, Shelter, Burn, Gorilla Biscuits, and a list that goes on for pages. Then Revelation started putting out shitty records, like Elliott... boring, droning wanna be Folk bands that "explored" the emotional side of Punk. There were bands that pulled it off great, like Lifetime, but they knew when to stop and when it was dribble. This whiny cry-baby shit can only appeal to a bunch of black-turtle neck wearing indie snobs. By the end of this record you're ready to burn every field in sight, just to make sure the flowers are dead. You want to strangle that ex-girlfriend who dumped you ten years ago, and you want to listen to Ted Nugent because you feel like every bone from your spine has been removed. Revelation should go back to doing Hardcore records and Elliott should just go.(CD)-**Myk**

Eloy "Chronicles I & II" *(SPV, 344 Dutch Neck Rd, POB 360, East Windsor, NJ 08520)*. SPV loves these two disc mini sets. This set is much like the Sodom set they released. The biggest difference is that I never heard of Eloy before. I spoke to a friend from Germany who informed me that Eloy had been around for years, and was fairly well known in Europe. This collection is a history. It is two discs full of songs that the band did during a reunion in 1994. The original songs had all been released some ten years earlier. This is a nice little sampler into the works of the band, especially stateside where they seem to be unknown. Eloy is a mix of Pink Floyd meets Yes and Styx. On occasion you hear bits that could be off a Jethro Tull record. They do a great job of mixing all this together to come up with something other than dribble. This will please any fan of the aforementioned bands. It is weird to receive this on a label like SPV though; there isn't any Metal or Hard Rock in here, just some quality musicianship. A big surprise from this label!(CD)-**Myk**

Engine Orange *(Skyhigh, 27 West 38th St., New York, NY 10018)*. Engine Orange is a New York based band that calls their style of music organic. Meshing the Hip Hop sounds of samples and big ass bass beats with jagged electric guitar lines a la Rage and Bizkit along with a few techno leanings and a plethora of attitude, EO is a virtual Y2K musical potpourri ("I Get Sick"). If you could imagine Filter, Wu-Tang and Crystal Method collaborating, the end result would be Engine Orange, a band that seems to be more of a machine than a musical entity. Check these guys out to see a futuristic vision of Hard Rock.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

The Enkindels "Can't Stop The Enkindels" *(Initial, POB 17131, Louisville, KY 40217)*. Ten songs of super-catchy hook-laden Pop Punk. Now that was a cool sentence. Come on, three hyphenated words? The design on the booklet, sleeve, and traycard is funny -- retro 70's basketball watercolors with a red and yellow border. The songs tell stories of touring, relationships and the "Life of A Kansas Strip Queen." Personally, the tempo is a little to slow for me, but it's a decent listen, especially if you dig these studs.(CD)-**Chris Munity**

Enslaved "Mardraum" *(Necropolis/Osmose, POB 14815, Fremont, CA 94539)*. One of my all time favorite labels, Osmose, returns, this time via the folks at Necropolis who have licensed this for the United States. Enslaved have always had the best mix of Death Metal, violent guitar riffs, Black Metal, and traditional Norwegian Folk music. *Mardraum* is no exception, right down to the tradition of Enslaved printing their lyrics in both English and Norwegian. The times that vocalist Grutle is doing his heaviest vocals he has a grinding, grating voice, that sounds much like any Mayhem album, but when he sings, he has no equal. Not even Ihsahn has a voice like this. Grutle's ability to switch from 9000 mph Black Metal to a Metal Folk ballad breakdown is second to none. Enslaved music is truly epic, as it takes a form of orchestration that no other heavy band could hope to equal. If you count the split that Enslaved did with Emperor, I believe that this is their fifth album. Each one shows is a progression as the band perfects their style of brutality. My personal favorite is *Eld*, but *Mardraum* does not fall short on any count. It is a breath taking look at the Black Metal scene, and where a talented band can go with it.(CD)-**Myk**

Exhumed "Slaughter Cult" *(Relapse, 1720 State Rd, Upper Darby, PA 19082)*. Lightning fast Grind/Splattercore with absolutely no apologies for anyone. These guys come the Carcass school of thinking. Very bassy sounding, with sludgy drums mixed under very powerful and upfront guitars that are then mixed with venom spewed vocals that sound like they are shredding vocals chords with every word. The lyrics and the cover (which is apparently banned in several places already) are non-stop gore, with songs like "Carnal Epitaph," "Funeral Fuck," and "A Lesson In Pathology" you know what you are in for. This is a lost are from the '80's, playing and writing totally offensive Metal like one would write a totally offensive horror movie. The kinship is there and it always made sense. People just

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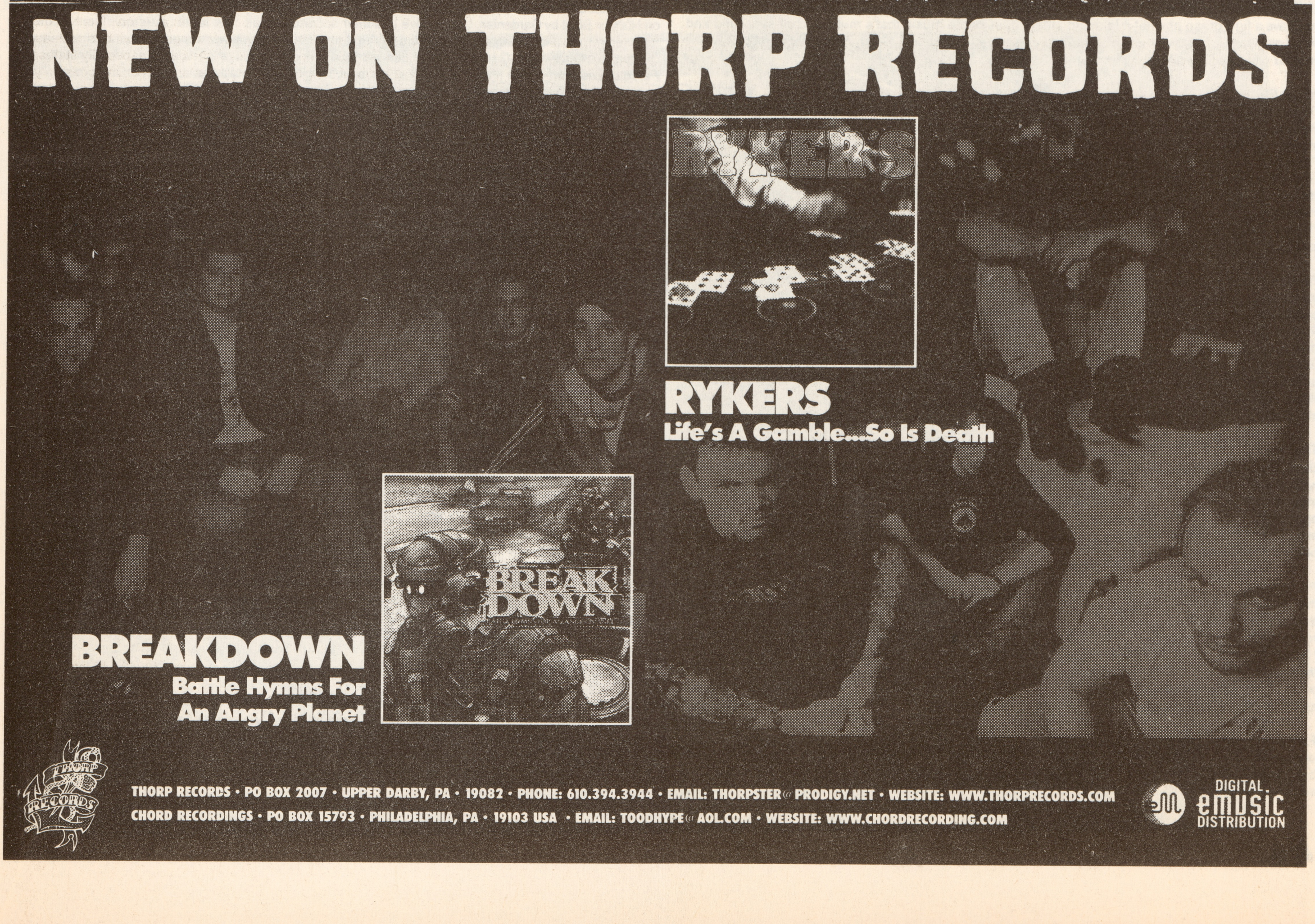
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stopped exploring it, until Exhumed. They are the second wave and only you can decide if they are filthy enough to pick up.(CD)-**Myk**

The Explosion "Steal This" *(Revelation, POB 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232).* Unfortunately, this is only an EP, and is under nine minutes in length. Fast Punk with the Hardcore influence that reminded me of early Uniform Choice/Unity. For some reason the fourth tune reminded me of the Bay City Rollers.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

EyeHateGod "Confederacy Of Ruined Lives" *(Century Media, 1453-A 14th St. #324, Santa Monica, CA 90404).* It has to be about four years since the last EHG full-length came out. Earlier this year they released a compilation of hard to get and demo tracks. It was refreshing to finally here something different, but it was still the same old songs. Now there is a new collection entirely. The most obvious difference on this new album is the vocals. Mike Williams has been sober for some time. It is pretty well known that a lot of his vocal venom was launched from his assorted abuses. The vocals are still rough and nasty, but they lack that quality of blood shooting from his throat with every word. All the side projects the EHG members have been in seemed to have rubbed off as well. The guitars aren't as sludgy, and there are a lot more riffs now. They have stepped up from some of the snail paces they used to take. The great thing about this album -- aside from being the return of EyeHateGod -- is that they are still a Metal band; while most bands are doing the Stoner, Sabbath rip off thing, EHG is still doing the heroine inspired hate-Metal they've always done. It is a little different, even a little updated, but it's what we were all looking for and EHG totally delivers.(CD)-**Myk**

Factory 81 "Mankind" *(Mojo, 1531 14th St., Santa Monica, CA 90404).* Self-proclaimed "Aggro-Metal." I don't know what that means but it sounds like the hush singing to screaming that Glassjaw does so well. Other tunes like, "Peace Officer," remind me of a mix of Tool and Rage Against the Machine meets Korn. But since we have so many bands that sound like this, why do we need another mediocre one?(CD)-**Chris Munity**

Famous *(1605 Worldwide, www.thefamoussite.com).* Famous is a band getting a lot of buzz these days over on the West Coast. Is there any merit to this hype machine? Yes and no. Yes, if you dig the Godsmack riffings with a dark Tool mentality and Papa Roach's vibrance ("Secrets," "The End Of Everything"). No, if you hate the disposable imagery that most Rock bands carry these days, not to mention the "oh, poor me" lyrical content, not to mention the lack of anything that's groundbreaking here. Famous is a solid band, but that seems to be about it. Perhaps a better name for this band may be Almost Famous.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Fayman and Fripp "A Temple In the Clouds" *(Projekt, POB 166155, Chicago, IL 60616).* From what I gather, these guys went to a legendary Temple called Anapraxis (I think in Greece) and came out with this. The heavens opened and spirit, flesh, past and future all collided in this mixture of amplified sound. This comes with an entire story that is completely intriguing. There are only four songs but one is like 30 minutes, so it's not a rip. It is purely orchestrated music, and at times one can hear the ocean. Mmm, some of it reminds me of the scene in *Eyes Wide Shut* where Mr. Hartford is revealed, while some of it sounds like it is from Baraca. It has a natural feel to it, as well as an ancient one. It is very original and deep while not the least bit pretentious. It makes me think about things...like life, death, and spirits and such. An amazing release from Projekt.(CD)-**Corporate Whore**

The Figs "Avalanche" *(www.thefigs.com).* The Figs are a female outfit from Long Island that derive a lot of their style from such other female acts as Indigo Girls and Melissa Etheridge. On their 10 track CD, this duo has many friends that help flesh out their Folk Rock tinged with dashes of Pop and Country tunes to create a very solid and complete disc. From the Bob Dylan-esque "Tree of Shame" to the shuffle feel of "Valentine's Day" to the upbeat breakup song "Avalanche," these ladies show that they have a firm grasp of what it takes to create passionate music that's mutually self-satisfying and crowd pleasing. If you like the subtle sounds of female fronted Folk Rock, check out this outfit, you'll be glad you did.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Finger Eleven "The Greyest of Blue Skies" *(Wind Up, 72 Madison Ave. 8th Fl, New York, NY 10016).* Finger Eleven's sophomore effort is yet another strong showing from these Canadian cripplers of melodic Metal . Their latest 11 track offering is laden with thick guitar riffs ("For The Ocean"), programmed sounds that fit just right and the perfect blend of vocal melody and musical harmony ("Sick Of It All," "Drag You Down"). Emotionally charged as they are guitar driven ("Broken Words"), Finger Eleven seems to have a good handle on the mope Metal genre. Yet these crafty Canadians rise above that stereotype by providing some truly passionate vocals and top notch songwriting that manages to strike chords and tug at heart strings yet never goes overboard on the sap-o-meter ("Bones And Joints"). For a truly emotional roller coaster ride that rocks, Finger Eleven is the band that just can't be outdone. For fans of hard rock with soul.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Firebird *(The Music Cartel, POB 629, Port Washington, NY 11056).* Firebird's self titled disc is a 10 track effort consisting of some of the stoniest, grooviest Rock which I've heard in sometime. Along the parallels of such '60's greats like Cream and Jimmy Hendrix, Firebird specializes in well-crafted Acid Rock which is far from being slow, boring and uncatchy. Unlike others in its genre, this group keeps the momentum flowing with some outstanding six string acrobatics and foot tapping beats. Surprisingly, Firebird features Bill Steer formerly of Carcass and Leo Smee of Cathedral. When you purchase this CD (And you better) be sure to smoke some fine greens before giving this puppy a listen. Just close your eyes and you'll swear it's 1969 all over again. Heck, even the vocalist sounds like Jack Bruce's twin brother. Rock on.(CD)-**Alex**

The Firebird Band "The Setting Sun and Its Satellites" *(Headhunter/Cargo Music, 4901-906 Morena Blvd., San Diego, CA 92117-3432).* Quirky and noisy are the best words to describe this release. Here within you can find plenty of fuzz drenched guitars, weird drum machine beats and occasional electronic blips. If an Indie Rock band like Silkworm had access to a cheesy Casio synthesizer the end product would be The Firebird Band. Unfortunately, songs seem to lack catchiness; however, the strong point on this effort are the vocals and lyrics which are emotion driven and insightful. Not bad, but I've heard better.(CD)-**Alex**

Fit of Anger *(New Found Hope, POB 564551, College Point, NY 11356).* Fit Of Anger returns with their debut CD after a lengthy absence. This seminal NYHC outfit provides eight bone crunching tunes that are deep in lyrical content and are extremely volatile musically ("An Idea"). Taking NYHC back to its roots, FOA implement the traditional sing along choruses and tight breakdowns that made Hardcore such a deity ("Fit Of Anger," "Bring Them Back Home"). Sometimes it takes something from the past to lead us down the path to follow, and FOA has done just that on their latest CD. If you are a fan of the way the Hardcore scene used to be, pick this CD up to reaffirm your faith that there are still a few bands around doing it the right way.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Five Cent Hero *(fivecenthero@aol.com).* Once in a while, a local band comes along and knocks you on your ass, and as you shake the dust from your Levi's, you ask, "Who the hell was that?" The latest band to throw the Queens, New York scene off balance is the quartet Five Cent Hero. Their four song sample is laden with groove and soul and sounds great when turned up to 11 ("The Eighty Ninth Street Hostage"). Their Foo Fighters meets Quicksand styled sound doesn't hurt, either, as they give us a souped up, pop version of anger and suffering sans unearthly screaming, unnecessary distortion and downright stupidity ("If Sorry Were Nickels"). Almost with a tinge of Roots Rock, their deep lyrical content and heartfelt delivery gives the girls something to scream about. With their subtle yet very present guitar attack and strong sense of timing and precision, they give the guys something to raise their fists to. Call 'em Emo, call 'em Rock, but definitely pick this CD up and feel the power of Five Cent Hero.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

The Forgotten "Keep the Corpses Quiet" *(TKO, 4104 24th St. #103, San Francisco, CA 94114).* The Forgotten is a West Coast Punk Rock band that takes the old school route on their latest release. This 15 track disc is chock full of power chorded anthems that will have you lacing up your Docs and getting ready to slam dance your way into the pit with childhood abandon ("Air Raid,""). Blending the vocal styling of Rancid with the Punk Rawk assault of Ramones, Misfits and Black Flag ("Outsider"), these guys are full of sing along choruses and pure Punk Rock fun ("Get Out"). For those who claim their Punk Rock heroes as Offspring and Blink, please stop reading. Now, for the un-delusional, The Forgotten's latest is surely something to remember, and you should give it a spin.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Frigate "Blow Me Down" *(Spinning, 360 Congress St., Studio 3, Boston, MA 02210).* Totally catchy uptempo Rock, lyrically and musically. The vocal trade-offs between Tim Gillis on guitar and Scurvyann Bean on bass -- the two of them are so darn cutesy it brings a tear to my eye. Like Peter Parker, only a tad better.(CD)-**Darren**

Fueled By Ignorance *(www.fueledbyignorance.net).* Fueled By Ignorance is a capable quartet from The Great White North that mix the dissonance of Deftones with the crunch of VOD to create a pretty head bobbing, neck snapping vibe. Include some Hardcore screams that border on vocal gymnastics ("Widow") and you've got yourself a hell of an intense ride courtesy of FBI. Massively melodic yet bruisingly abrasive, FBI meshes some standard sounds of the new Metal movement and create an interesting and attention holding hybrid in the process ("Echoes"). Check it out if you like the artsy side of heavy music.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Gameface "Always On" *(Revelation, POB 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232).* Gameface have a heavy radio-friendly sound that I prefer over all of those bands on radio that have a similar sound (Matchbox 20, Third Eye Blind), but I can't really say that I like this too much. This sounds a lot like their last album.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

GarageFuzz "Turn The Page.The Season Is Changing" *(One Foot/Devil Doll, POB 30727, Long Beach, CA 90803).* This is a weird mix of Unity (post Uniform Choice version) meets the Smithereens. Smooth vocals with some catchy riffs make this a decent listen.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Garden Of Shadows "Oracle Moon" *(Earache, 43 West 38th St. 2nd Fl, New York, NY 10018).* Garden of Shadows is a Maryland based quintet that plays a very un-American style of Metal for an American Metal band. Leaning towards the Gothic/Death side of the spectrum, GOS roll out seven lengthy tracks that never lose their steam nor becomes a burden to listen to ("Dissolution of the Forms"). Armed with a twin guitar assault (a male/female combo no less!), vocals from hell and overall a solid sense of the genre in which they are working in (a long way of saying, if you didn't read up on them, you'd think they were European), Garden of Shadows puts atmosphere and mood to good use and shows that they have the Metal sensibilities to back up their quest ("Citadel Of Dreams"). If you dig Dimmu Borgar and Cradle of Filth and want to give something domestic a go, check out this fine tuned Metal machine.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Gardenian "Sindustries" *(Nuclear Blast, POB 43618, Philadelphia, PA 19106).* This is the first album on Nuclear Blast by Gardenian, but I believe it is their second overall. The label Listenable from France released the first. Once again the band, and the Gothenburg scene, proves why they are the envy of the entire Metal world. Gardenian reminds me of a mix between Dark Tranquility, the vocalist from Paradise Lost mixed with Rick from 25 Ta Life, and the guitarists from Samael in the later years. It is a very diverse mix of influences that make from one hell of a composition. There are no boring parts, as the tempo fluctuates through the entire album. There are soft soothing parts that are then shredded apart by the searing guitar attack. Much like the bands on the WAR label, Gardenian are a highly skilled band that have just come into their own and are just starting to make waves in the Metal world. Not for the Black or Death Metal purists, as this album to transcends all genres and does something new and out of the norm.(CD)-**Myk**

Gardenian "Sindustries" *(Nuclear Blast, POB 43618, Philadelphia, PA 19106).* Gardenian picks up right where this maniacal Metal outfit left off from their last release. On their new 10 track disc, Gardenian again blends the classic Metal sensibilities of NWOBHM and late '70's Rock with some bone crushing riffs and pounding rhythms ("Long Snap To Zero"). While these guys show that they can be as technical as they can be jarring, their avant garde Metal assault on your eardrums is a welcomed change from the putrid Rap Rock combos and lame mope Metal raiding the airwaves. Gardenian is not afraid to put an acoustic guitar in a heavy song ("Self Proclaimed Messiah"), nor are they afraid to crank it all the way to 11 ("The Suffering"). Sometimes full on Death Metal ("Scissorfight"), other times melodic Thrash, while still others robot Metal ("Sindustries"), Gardenian always proves to be refreshingly innovative. Their latest is a must have Metal album, as it appeals to any fans of At The Gates, In Flames, or even Maiden, Priest and that ilk. Definitely one of the few albums worth every penny.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Gaza Strippers "1000 Watt Confessions" *(Lookout, POB 11374, Berkeley, CA 94712-2874).* Without a doubt, the Gaza Strippers are one of the best Rock n' Roll Punk bands out there! Tracks such as "Newburgh Housewives" and "Catfight" thrive thanks to a megadose of blazing guitar licks, snotty yet melodic vocals and infectious choruses which will stay stuck in your brain for many weeks. Lyrics deal with such serious subject matter like hot rods, housewives, drugs, partying and sex just to name a few general topics. Perfect music for a wet T-shirt contest!(CD)-**Alex**

Gouge *(27 Jackson Ave., Wayne, NJ 07470).* Gouge is a New Jersey Hard Rock hodgepodge, blending Dj scratches among hardcore beats and Death Metal riffs. On their five song sampler, these guys mix it up quite nicely, implementing a Candiria/Soulfly type vibe in between some hard and headbanging moments ("Manipulate"). While most bands sound generic using all of these techniques, Gouge instead know how to make the most of what they've got to create a familiar sound that's not played out nor is it a direct rip from another big band ("Transparent"). This is what Limp Bizkit would sound like if Durst didn't join the darkside: heavy riffs with good turntables and an aggressive rhythm section.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Hacksaw *(Spectrasonicsound, POB 80067, Ottawa, ON, K1S 5N6, Canada).* Yawn, yawn. This Toronto, Canada based outfit is nothing more then a third rate Indie Rock band with Punk overtones. Sure, I heard traces of Bad Religion, Tad and Silkworm throughout certain tracks, but who the hell cares? All songs are void of hooks, energy and anything worth praising. Thanks to Hacksaw I have a new frisbee to try out next summer.(CD)-**Alex**

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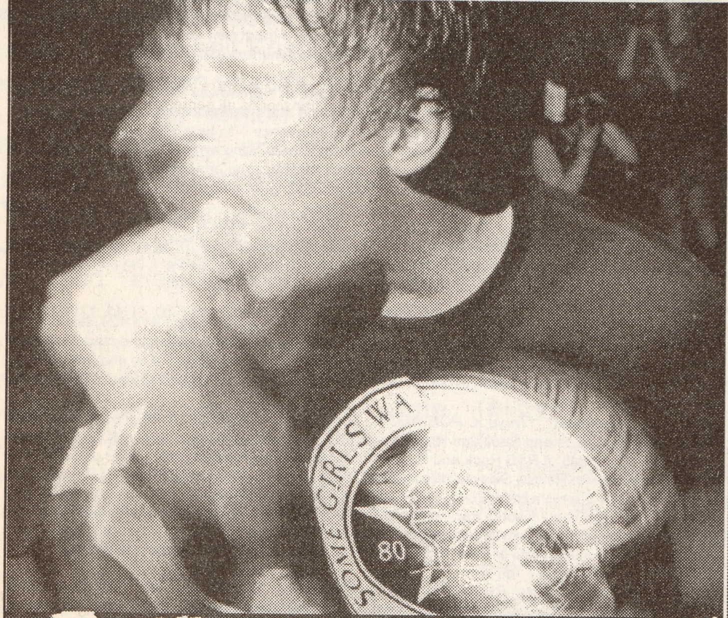

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Halfmanwonder *(www.halfmanwonder.com)*. Halfmanwonder is a juggernaut of an outfit, juxtaposing a Rock backbeat with such candy coated choruses that they'd be considered dangerous by any dentist. On their four song sampler, these well seasoned players show that they have a knack for writing hook happy yet not hokey songs ("Build") that will have you tapping your toes and humming along ("Markee"). If you like Matchbox 20 and Third Eye Blind and would like to hear a band that takes what they do and make it listenable and dammit, even likable, look no further than Halfmanwonder. These guys are sure to be taking over airwaves at an adult alternative station near you.(CD)**-MikeSOS**

Halford "Resurrection" *(Metal-Is, 5226 Green's Dairy Road, Raleigh, NC 27616)*. Bruce Dickinson had some real problems when he first went solo, until he hooked up with Roy Z. So what was the first thing Rob Halford did when he decided to return to Metal? Rob got Roy Z. His magic touch extended to Mr. Halford, helping produce one of the best pure Metal records in recent memory -- not to mention making his last couple of works leave your memory! A guest spot by Dickinson himself graces the track "The One You Love To Hate" to show his support for Halford's comeback. The weakest point on this record is "Silent Screams," a poorly executed ballad that just doesn't deliver. The vocals are bad, the concept is bad, and it's just a downer on an otherwise stellar album. *Resurrection* is similar to *...Sad Wings...* to *Stained Class* era Priest. Halford's voice is crisp, and even the heaviness of *Painkiller* is thrown in to seal the package. The title track is the best song on the album, but followed closely by "Cyberworld," a Metal piece that's an instant classic. If you were one of those people, like me, that stopped getting Halford records after *Painkiller*, now is the time to come back. This is the return of the Metal god, his true apology for saying "Metal Is Dead."(CD)**-Myk**

Hammerfall "Renegade" *(Nuclear Blast, POB 43618, Philadelphia, PA 19106)*. The cover art is back, the line up is back, and so are the leather outfits. It's finally time for the return of the Templars Of Steel. *Renegade* is altogether different from the pieces that came before. The most obvious difference is that there are no cover songs on this record. Everything is written by the band; I don't believe Hammerfall even had any guest writers like they did on the first album. This still has the power of the previous outings, but there are differences. As a rule, the songs are slower and tend to be more anthemic. Joacim tends to explore the higher end of his vocals more in many of the songs. As in the past, one of the strongest songs on the album is the title track. I tend to like the songs that have a more chugga guitar from the rhythm section. This album didn't grab me like the first two did. Certain songs I loved instantly, but on the whole I wasn't crushed. It is their first effort all by themselves, and there will be some growing pains. Still, a Hammerfall record that is a little under the set standard is aeons better than most of the crappy bands that have since sprung up due to Hammerfall's success. The more I listen to this album the more I like it. I guess it is the mellower aspect of the songs that threw me off. I loved that in your face sound of the first album. The instrumental track is a little much as well. The musicianship of this band is still top notch, and you will still enjoy this album. It's just a matter of whether you will like it as much as the earlier works.(CD)**-Myk**

Harvey Danger "King James Version" *(London-Sire, 936 Broadway, New York, NY 10010)*. They finally sound like a real band! The songs are more well-thought and the lyrics are brilliant. Some awesome production by John Goodmanson... (CD)**-Darren**

The Haunted "The Haunted Made Me Do It" *(Earache, 43 W 38th St., New York, NY 10018)*. Holy shit! I didn't think it possible, I didn't dare hope, but this album is actually more brutal and furious than the self-titled debut! Two former members of At The Gates, and Jensen from Séance and Witchery form the base for the Swedish disaster machine. Introduce new vocalist Marco Aro and Per Moller Jensen on drums and you have a line-up of pure shred. This record just oozes Punk Rock. It's like Discharge meets Gothenburg. Short songs (for a Metal record) with 100 mile an hour riffs, throat shattering screams, and drums that are as fast as they are powerful and grooved. This is one of the most perfect albums I have ever heard. Marco's vocals are different than the sound of the first album, but they aren't bad. They are just another vicious take on the same playing field. Once again these boys prove they are the best at whatever they set their minds to playing whether it be Haunted, ATG, or Witchery. If you have these musicians you have a great record, and this one sits very close to the top of that.(CD)**-Myk**

The Helios Sequence "Com Plex" (*Cavity Search, POB 42246, Portland, OR 97242)*. A good description: a trippy British sounding pop act who can almost get away with a cover of The Beatles' "Tomorrow Never Knows." I see images of Austin Powers when I hear this. Helios Sequence are taking the Beatles influence to places that Oasis never could.(CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

Hellnation "Cheerleaders For Imperialism" *(Slap A Ham, POB 420843, San Francisco, CA 94142)*. Hellnation returns with a new full-length that lasts some 29 tracks, the longest being a clockbreaking 1:15 minutes. This is everything you expect from a Power Violence record.. Short songs, with really punishing fast drums, lightning fast power chords, feedback, and a vocalist who is one step shy of screaming his lungs out. It would be next to impossible to pick any stand out songs, as they are all the same caliber. Sometimes it's actually hard to pick out when one ends and the next starts. Hellnation delivers everything someone who expect from them. This should be huge amongst the ABC No Rio crowd.(CD)**-Myk**

Her Vanished Grace "Colors Vols. 1&2" *(Athame, POB 179, New York, NY 10009)*. Kind of mainstream pop wannabees.. I don't like it, sort of a mix between Heart and Veruca Salt, but not as good as either.(CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

Hidden Agenda "The Six Song EP" *(Robagenda@aol.com)*. Hidden Agenda is one of those Long Island Hardcore hybrid bands that mix Hardcore, Punk, Oi and a little bit of Metal to create some slam danceable music. Suitable for your teenager's latest rebellion, HA's six song offering harken images of Sick Of It All and The Misfits done to a suburban beat ("Massapequa Drive By," "Cool Kids"). This quartet has got the act down tight and is a good listen for those that dig their Hardcore punk dirty, angry and raw.(CD)**-MikeSOS**

Iggy Pop "Live In NYC" *(King Biscuit Entertainment, POB 6700, FDR Station, New York, NY...couldn't read the zip code)*. This CD should tickle the fuckin' fancy of any Iggy Pop fanatic. *Live In NYC* was recorded during November '86 and features Mr. Pop delving into post Stooges classics such as "Gimme Danger," "Some Weird Sin" and "China Girl" (also recorded by David Bowie). Thankfully, the production is more clear then a sunny day in southern California. Altogether this is one stellar live recording!(CD)**-Alex**

In Aeternum "The Pestilent Plague" *(Necropolis, POB 14815, Fremont, CA 94539)*. Swedish Death Metal done right is almost an oxymoron, as most Swedish bands in the Death Metal genre are as solid as they come. In Aeternum is definitely no exception, yet they seem to be the ones to follow, as their eight track ride into the abyss is chock full of all that good Death Metal stuff. Things like blast beats and blood curdling screams are standard here, but what sets IA aside from the rest are not only their pristine guitar work ("Eternal Devastation") but also their sense of composition. Sometimes gothic, sometimes classic Metal and even sometimes pure thrash, these guys show that they can mix it up among the best of their breed ("Demon Possession") without cheesing out or sounding like they're trying too hard. The flow of the song is what is some Death Metal bands tend to forgo in attempt to blast beat or overkill riff you to death. IA instead lets the song flow and throws the blast beat here and the crushing riff there to create an effect that's dually brutal and very effective ("Wolves Blood"). Check it out Death Metal mongers!(CD)**-MikeSOS**

In Flames "Clayman" *(Nuclear Blast, POB 43618, Philadelphia, PA 19106)*. Anytime you get a record with the header "IN FLAMES" you know it's quality. They are the kings of the Gothenberg sound, in the traditional sense. There are other bands from that area that have been around longer, like Dark Tranquility, but most of them have gone on to explore and expand their music. In Flames continues to put out Iron Maiden style, heavy riffed Death Metal with ATG style vocals. That was what made that scene famous. There may not be a better line-up of musicians in Death Metal. They have songs that go from 100mph to almost zero, but all with a precise plan that fits into the grand scope. The band can play some of the most brutal mosh parts conceivable, and then settle into a finger pick slow down. The drummer, to keep up with the rest of the band, has to be phenomenal. The vocals are always punishing, and don't ruin the record with poor un-needed singing. There are a few choruses that are sung, but they are kept to a minimum and his voice is really good on those parts. *Clayman*, like any In Flames record, keeps the best of what the band does, but does manage, without destroying the structural integrity of the songs, to explore enough to sound like a different record than last. Equal to *Colony*, another masterpiece in its own right.(CD)**-Myk**

Internal Void "Unearthed" *(Southern Lord, POB 291967, Los Angeles, CA 90029)*. Internal Void is a collection of nuggets from the '70's mixed with the vibe of the current mean streets. Of course there is the obligatory comparison to Black Sabbath. I think the band kind of revels in it. But, from my point of view, the member that most sounds like Sabbath is the vocalist. This guy does one hell of an Ozzy. The music is like a cross between *Masters* era Sabbath, Deep Purple, a little Rolling Stones, and some down and dirty '70's Punk Rock. They have a really intense bass sound that totally defines the music, and a lot of the tracks are instrumental so the music is showcased. The guitars have lots of fuzz and the notes hold forever. Totally goovin' Rock n' Roll for the next generation.(CD)**-Myk**

J Majesty *(Some, 122 West 29th St, 4th Fl, New York, NY 10001)*. This is such a strange and diverse disc that mixes the sound/feel of Indie Rock meets Classic Rock. I would have to say that at times J Majesty sound like Karate, and at other times sounds like they would fit in a mix with some of the '70s well known Hard/Acid Rock bands that we all grew up with. Does anybody remember when 95.5 WPLJ was a Rock station? If so, you should check this out.(CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

J Church "One Mississippi" *(Honest Don's, POB 192027, San Francisco, CA 94119-2027)*. You've got to tip your hat to a band like J Church for releasing a brand spankin' new 26 track CD which clocks in at nearly 74 minutes. Talk about getting your money's worth! Most songs showcase this group's moody yet melodic Punk Rock which can be rather poppy at times; not in a Green Day sense, but more like the early '90s British band Eugenius. The vocal style is narrative, and the lyrics are very introspective. You've just got to dig lyrical lines such as "Smoke your Camel lights."(CD)**-Alex**

The Jack Saints "Rock and Roll Holocaust" *(Scooch Pooch, 5850 West 3rd #209, 90036)*. I don't know why every song on this album reminds me of "TV Party" by Black Flag or some live outtake by The New York Dolls... It's all about the typical Rock and Roll habits, blah blah blah. Everyone's want to bring back Rock and Roll, blah blah blah.... Apparently this album was released before overseas in another language and this edition features bonus tracks? I don't know; who cares at this hour?(CD)**-Darren**

Jacky Paper "Slithering Disc" *(www.jackypaper.com)*. Jacky Paper is a rock band hailing from California that has its feet firmly planted in the post-Gr*nge Seattle sound of the mid 90's. Their 13 track disc is heavy in the sense that it is dynamic; JP never overpower you as much as they overcome you, enveloping you into their hypnotic vocals and sturdy rhythms ("Blue Wednesday") that range from wah pedaled madness to acoustic alchemy. Imagine the gritty semi Metal of Soundgarden with the Zeppelin inspired feel that Stone Temple Pilots ("Infect Me") bring to the table, and what you've got here is a monster of a band. Dark and atmospheric, Jacky Paper take a 90's rock sound and twist it with 70's rock moments ("Pride," "Throwin' Stones") to create a great new sound for the 00's. If you're a rock fan, brace yourself for these hard rocking California dynamos.(CD)**-MikeSOS**

The Jazz Butcher Conspiracy "Glorious and Idiotic" *(ROIR, 611 Broadway Suite 411, New York, NY 10012)*. The Jazz Butcher Conspiracy is a five piece band that's been kicking around since 1982. I found this live recording -- which is also the band's fifteenth release -- to be a little boring. Their music pretty much reminded me of a poor man's Dave Matthews Band with a little less energy and originality. Most of the disc's 13 songs have the same mellow song structures with the occasional heavier edge thrown in. Not terribly bad, but not too interesting for a one hour live set.(CD)**-Lloyd**

The Jazz June "The Medicine" *(Initial, POB 17131, Louisville, KY 40217)*. The best way to describe this would be an aggro-Promise Ring; to me, the vocal styles are similar. There is lots of sliding up and down the guitar frets. The first song is titled "Viva La Speed Metal," and is a big standout on the CD. Fans of Van Pelt as well as Hot Rod Circuit would like this.(CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

Jebediah "Of Someday Shambles" *(Big Wheel Recreation, 325 Huntington Ave #24, Boston, MA 02115)*. The Get Up Kids love these guys (and all), maybe we should too? Well, they're somewhere in that "I-swear-I'm-not-Emo" realm of Emo with great hooks and witty lyrics. Oddly enough, you'll be able to hear the occasional allusion to Green Day, as I can call myself a fan of Jebediah.(CD)**-Darren**

Jeff Dahl "Pancake 31" *(Triple X, POB 862529, Los Angeles, CA 90086-2529)*. Finally, a guy that knows how to let loose and Rock and Roll. Former Powertrip and Angry Samoan, Jeff Dahl releases yet another full-length of R&B Rock and Roll. This shit makes me want to grab a sixer of Schlitz and rent *Roadhouse* with Patrick Swayze. Wow, the entire album is midwestern, bluesy R&R which also reminds me a bit of a more ballsy Elvis... and then "All The Wrong Reasons" came on. It's a slow little ditty, quite sad, and is my favorite track on here. I read somewhere that this guy toured with The Real Kids and Lazy Cowgirls, which seems like the perfect bill for him. "X Punkrocker" is a song about people who leave the world of Punk Rock, and it's not lame. NICE!(CD)**-Corporate Whore**

Jejune "RIP" *(Big Wheel Recreation, 325 Huntington Ave #24, Boston, MA 02115)*. A poppy Emo/Rock act who luckily burned this wax treat before they spontaneously combusted. I remember reviewing their first disc, and from what I remember the differences in sound between the two are huge. Between that disc and this one, Jejune moved from the east to the west coast and had a growing fanbase, probably due to playing shows with bands like Get Up Kids, Jets to Brazil and Jimmy Eat World. Five new, five old, and two remixed tracks.(CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

Jejune "RIP" *(Big Wheel Recreation, 325 Huntington Ave. #24, Boston, MA 02115)*. Why do people think this is "Punk" or "Emo" or whatever it's called? Let's get one thing straight: it's PROG ROCK, plain and simple. Genesis, Yes, Gentle Giant, Tears For Fears... Jejune sounds like all those bands, and there's no mistake about it. Jejune could've opened for Genesis in 1974. Even Genesis, Gentle Giant, Gryphon, and Jethro Tull were on indie labels before they signed to majors. The liner notes in this are done by the Big Wheel Head Honcho, and give a nice history of the band. This CD is mainly

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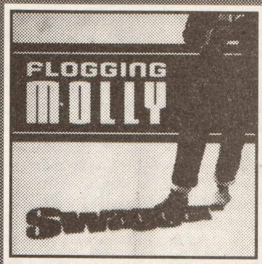
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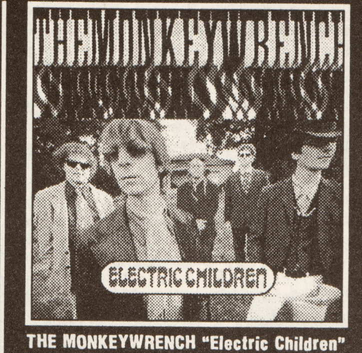
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a compilation of stuff that was already released on other labels as seven-inches and compilations, but there are some new tracks for fans. A progressive, poppy Rock band with guy/girl vocals and sweet sounding music.(CD)**-Jack**

Johnny Cash "American III: Solitary Man" *(American/Columbia, 550 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022).*). Thanks, Rich for giving me this early Xmas present! Rick Rubin should be given a medal of honor for bringing us the Beastie Boys, Public Enemy, and LL Cool J. But bringing back the career of Johnny Cash is a godsend. This is Johnny Cash's third CD with Rick and again, gold has struck a third time. Johnny Cash (the coyote on *The Simpsons*) performs another 14 songs of love, god and murder. The original Man in Black (for all you Goth types) belts out songs of pain and love that no other man can. Covering Tom Petty's "Won't Back Down" gives the song a whole new meaning. The best track for me is Nick Cave's "The Mercy Seat." Johnny Cash singing this song about a man's feelings right before he gets electrocuted in jail is incredible. Sheryl Crow sings on a couple of songs... I can't stand her normally, but here she earned a whole new respect. An album that everyone that has ever felt depression, lost love, and solitude should own.(CD)**-Jack**

Judgement Of Paris "Signal" *(Projekt, POB 166155, Chicago, IL 60616)*. This is the second Judgement re-issue from Projekt, in addition to the *Signal* full-length and the *Tangent* EP is included as a bonus. Of the two re-issues, this is the more funky and Hip-Hop based; it still has many ethereal qualities, but more diverse elements. At times there are hints of Muslimgauze, as well as Vidna Obmana. One of the most diverse recordings Projekt has ever released. For any fan of soundscape type recordings.(CD)**-Myk**

Kilowatthours "Strain Of Positive Thinking" *(Temporary Residence Ltd, POB 22910, Baltimore, MD 21203-4910)*. This disk has an amazing sound. Musically, this is a cross between Cerberus Shoal and SDRE, but could almost be compared to Elliot (a similar sound, but the style is different) as one of the members was a founding member of both Falling Forward and Elliot. The band's strong point is the mixture of guitar Indie Rock and contrasting piano with the smooth but powerful vocals. This is a good disc, and I would recommend it to fans of Christy Front Drive.(CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

King Apparatus *(Asian Man, POB 35585, Monte Sereno, CA 95030)*. Hailing from Canada, King Apparatus is a fun loving six piece outfit that plays some mean Ska Rock that borders on Zydeco ("Break Your Heart," "Feel No Pain"). On their self titled 20 song collection, these guys provide some good background music for any good old fashioned beer hall celebration or light hearted get together ("Wasteland"). Catchy and able to put a spring in your step, King Apparatus is a good disc to have to start up a party, even if the party consists of just you and tons of controlled substances. Some skanking stuff that actually rocks ("Searching For A New Guitar Hero"), and hell, it comes from Canada to boot!(CD)**-MikeSOS**

Kronically Inkorrect "FTW" *(www.angelfire.com/ny2/kronicallyinkorrect)*. Kronically Inkorrect is a powerful quintet from Westchester, New York that has got the Death Metal growl down to a tee. On their five song disc, these boys pummel you with pounding rhythms and Hardcore grooves that would remind you of a young and hungry Biohazard ("Thru My Eyes"). Mixing the snarl of Death Metal with the middle class aggression of Hardcore ("I'll Be The One"), KI barrage you with some enticing riffs and keep the metal loud and proud. Extra points for their usage of Tazz's catch phrase ("FTW"). Carry on, boys and bring it on home!(CD)**-MikeSOS**

LOT "How Good the World Could Be...Again" *(Good Life, POB 114-8500, Kortrijk Belgium)*. LOT is short for Length Of Time and this quartet from Belgium waste no time in delivering some intense Hardcore grooves and Metal riffs that mix such diverse influences as Life Of Agony and Snapcase. In any event, LOT kicks some serious ass on their 10 track disc that mixes the sonic boom of Metal with the groove of Hardcore at its heaviest ("The Coming Dark Age"). While other bands may outdo LOT in specific areas, these guys seem to be one of the tightest outfits to combine all the elements and play it off well ("A Desert In The Heart"). If you'd like to hear what the Europeans are moshing to these days, check out Length Of Time and be prepared to pick up some change.(CD)**-MikeSOS**

The Ladderback "Honest, I Swear It's The Turnstyles..." *(Bi-Focal, POB 296, Greenville, NC 27835-0296)*. Having recently moved to Raleigh, North Carolina, I have been going to see some of "local" talent. This is one band who is starting to create "something" in the South, and other areas of the USA. The Ladderback play good Math-Indie-Emo Rock that kids with backpacks and girls wearing baby doll T-shirts (mmm... baby doll T-shirts...) will definitely enjoy. They wear their hearts on their sleeves, singing about gushy things like love. "Few and Far Between" is my favorite track, with a really nice guitar riff that isn't overused. A very good release by a very good band. They were a three-piece for a bit, now they went back to the four-piece to fill out those guitar parts. An excellent band to see live, also.(CD)**-Jack**

Lamb Of God "New American Gospel" *(Metal Blade/Prosthetic, 2828 Cochran St., PMB 302, Simi Valley, CA 93065)*. This is one brutal and intense record, as much screeching Grindcore as it is Metal. Shrilling vocals that sound like a death cry are laid over an all out sonic attack starting with unbelievable machine gun drums. There is some serious double kick ripping it up here. The guitars sound like they could be off any Integrity record, as easily as a Napalm Death record. The packaging is excellent as well, with a rough brown paper cover screen printed with black, silver and gold ink. The design is of the crown of thorns in black, and the metallics are just haphazardly thrown around as highlights. It really is stunning, especially for a label as big as Metal Blade. They usually don't put this kind of time into packaging. This is one of the most perfect Metalcore records I've ever had the pleasure to abuse myself with. It really reminds me of the first time I heard *Those Who Fear Tomorrow* and my life was shattered. Fucking brilliant. Although there is one downfall... the band used to be called Burn The Priest... why would anybody change a name like that?(CD)**-Myk**

Lazycain "July To October" *(Doghouse, POB 8946, Toledo, OH 43623)*. Armed with an English pop-core sound, Lazycain has this interesting style of a Punk band that wants to be The Promise Ring, or vice versa. In effect, the end result is quite interesting and works well. This disc is comprised of seven tracks that were recorded in four different sessions between 7/98 and 10/99.(CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

The Legendary Invisible Men "Who's Sorry Now?" *(Blood Red, 2134 NE 25th, Portland, OR 97212)*. Fourteen Garage Rock/Surf ditties, dished out by ex-members of The Bomboras, The Finks, and The Ghastly Ones. This is their first full-length after a couple of singles on Dionysus and a track on the *Zombie-A-Go-Go* comp, "Halloween Hootenanny." This is the perfect soundtrack to your Halloween party. Check songs like, "Smokin'," "Statutory Date," "Green Connection," and my favorite, "Poison Pen." This band is one of the better Surf/Garage bands I've heard in awhile. Boo! (CD)**-Chris Munity**

Lizzy Borden "Deal with the Devil" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St. PMB 302, Simi Valley, CA 93065)*. Metal veteran Lizzy Borden returns with a traditional Metal album that will have you teasing your hair and digging your spiked bracelet from the bottom of the junk drawer. This 11 track disc is chock full of Metal anthems ("Deal With The Devil") and is laden with stellar guitarwork ("Hell Is For Heroes"), not to mention Borden's patented wail ("We Only Come Out At Night"). While the album is loosely based around selling your soul to the devil, Borden proves that despite all the tumult in the music industry, he has remained true to his Metal cause by releasing this impassioned album. Definitely a good choice for the metalhead on your list.(CD)**-MikeSOS**

Lone Wolf James "Prey" *(www.lonewolfjames.com)*. Hailing from Boston, Lone Wolf James comes out as hard as someone can that wields an acoustic guitar. On his six song sojourn, Mr. James and company play some intense strummed out tunes that border on some of the late 80's hair Metal best ("Not Gonna Fall"). Chock full of melodic hooks and tasty guitar licks, Lone Wolf James brings home the bacon in a down home kind of way. Imagine Garth Brooks jamming out with Cinderella ("Center Stage") and you may have an inkling as to what Lone Wolf sounds like. Definitely check this out if you like some heartfelt acoustic music that doesn't include a Lilith Fair whine or a super sense of importance and simply rocks.(CD)**-MikeSOS**

Loose Lips "Talkin' Trash" *(TKO, 4104 24th St. #103, San Francisco, CA 94114)*. Loose Lips is a gutter Rock and Roll outfit from San Francisco that has as much in common with The Rolling Stones as they do the Dead Boys. Their 12 track disc is a ballsy batch of bluesy sleaze that'll have the drunk hootin' and hollerin' for more ("Jones St. Boneyard," "On My Way"). While at times these guys do become a bit redundant, their attitude makes up for the five chords that they permeated throughout the course of the disc. A little bit of Rockabilly, a dash of 50's nostalgia and a whole heap of Punk Rock attitude is what Loose Lips deliver ("Baby Talk"). If you like Punk that shows its roots, check these guys out.(CD)**-MikeSOS**

Lovewhip "Whip It Baby" *(Squirrelygirl, POB 2183, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130)*. Lovewhip is a refreshing breath of musical air, shown on their eight track disc. Blending horns and tropical beats into their version of world pop, this Massachusetts sextet defy you from getting lost in their sublime grooves that whisk you away to all of the world's paradises ("Oh Dear Jehu"). Taking smidgens of soul, Ska and salsa, Lovewhip encompasses a number of influences to create a very sassy and sexy version of music that uplifts your senses and speaks to your soul ("Rudies In Stereo"). If you're looking for an island getaway and can only spend $20, pick this disc up, some Bacardi Breezers and kick back with the $1.75 you've got left. Definitely worth a spin for those that dig Ska, pop and overall some relaxing party music.(CD)**-MikeSOS**

Lower East Side Stitches "Lower East Side" *(Artemis, 130 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10011)*. These boys play classic NYC Glam Punk. Fans of Johnny Thunders, Ramones, Sex Pistols, and Dead Boys will be pleased with LES Stitches. They even throw in an obscure cover of The Only Ones' "Another Girl Another Planet." I think these guys are gettin' a little more mature. Some tunes are slowed down a little bit. It's okay though, the tunes are pretty cool.(CD)**-Chris Munity**

Lucid Nation "DNA" *(Brain Floss, 8409 Hollywood Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90069)*. Lucid Nation is one of the more complex rock outfits on the scene today. On their latest 11 track disc, sheer brilliance shines through in many different forms. One part riot grrl outfit ("Pimpin'), one part free form '60's hippie throwback ("Kali") and all parts kick ass Rock and Roll band ("First Of A New Breed"), it's hard to believe that something this real comes from the West Coast, but alas, Lucid Nation hails from La-la land. Imagine Sonic Youth's cacophony meshed with the spirit of the Doors and the rhythm section of Soundgarden, and yes Dr. Frankenstein, a monster is born. Throw in an amazingly inspired female fronted version of the AC/DC groove classic "Night Prowler" and we have all the makings of an album that you need to hear to believe. For those that need a musical fix to accompany your drug of choice, look no further than Lucid Nation. Strong stuff that doesn't overpower your ears as much as it overpowers your head.(CD)**-MikeSOS**

Mancake "Part Man Part Pancake... We Will Destroy You" *(Art Monk, POB 6332, Falls Church, VA 22040)*. A drummer named Man and a bassist named Pants... A song called "International House of Mancake.".. Another called "Louisiana Purchase" having nothing to do with the historical event... So many reasons to love Mancake... Then I put on their EP and learned differently.(CD)**-Darren**

Margo Guryan "Take A Picture" *(Franklin Castle, 7510 W. Sunset Blvd #217, Hollywood, CA 90046)*. An influential classic 1968 pop masterpiece reissued with bonus tracks and liner notes -- talk about a no brainer, buy this.(CD)**-Darren**

Mayhem "Mediolanum Capta Est" *(Dwell, POB 39439, Los Angeles, CA 90039)*. The second official live album from this blackest of all Metal bands. Recorded in Italy during their reunion tour, this also spawned a live video if you're lucky enough to find it. This is the same recording as the release on Avantgarde of the same title. The American release features more color in the artwork, but does not boast the metallic etched jewel case. The major difference between this release and the classic *Live In Leipzig* is that this was recorded as a live record, *Leipzig* was actually just a high quality bootleg that was later released. The album features 12 tracks of non-stop, bloodcurdling Black Metal, not to mention the in between banter that really makes for the live experience. This is also where you finally get to hear Hellhammer in all his drum bashing glory. I still believe he is the best drummer on the planet, or at least the fastest. The track listing ranges from "Deathcrush" right up to "Wolf's Lair Abyss" which is great since technically both are only available on import.(CD)**-Myk**

Maze of Torment "Death Strikes" *(Necropolis, POB 14815, Fremont, CA 94539)*. Maze of Torment is yet another accomplished Swedish Metal band that combines the grind of Death Metal with some spurts of classic and traditional Metal to create a nine track disc that contains a bevy of banging riffs, thrashing drums and all a metalhead needs to get his groove on. Kind of on the Entombed side of the spectrum ("This Is Death"), MOT makes up for their lack of lyrical cohesion with thunderous claps of Metal madness that will no doubt illicit a horned hand from even the most hardened Metal fan ("The Sadist"). If you like the traditional Speed/Death Metal combo, then these guys are the band to give a listen to.(CD)**-MikeSOS**

Milemarker "Frigid Forms Sell" *(Lovitt, POB 248, Arlington, VA 22210)*. This is some hell of a mix of Devo/Servotron meets Sleepytime Trio/ Ink and Dagger. One minute this is *Mr. Roboto*, another minute this is heavy melodic Hardcore. Consisting of a mix of keyboards and guitar, male and female vocals and a tight rhythm section, this CD has been a frequently played disc in my auto. Standout songs like "Platinum" and "Insect Incest," which boasts lyrics like "You want to kick it to me, and then bite off my head!" This band features former Sleepytime Trio and Rah Brah's members. This is a top-notch album (as most of Lovitt's releases are) and is highly recommended.(CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

The Mystick Krewe Of Clearlight *(Tee Pee, POB 20307, New York, NY 10009)*. This is one slammin' '70's revival. It features current members of Down, Crowbar, and EyeHateGod. Mostly they are talking about Jimmy Bower who was, I believe, in all three, but who cares? That is just a sales point trying to grab the squatter kids into picking this up. The people who should really pick this up are the fans of '60's Psychedelic Rock like The Crazy World of Arthur Brown, Deep Purple, and Iron Butterfly. There are lots of keyboards pounding away in the foreground. There's a really groovy drum sound, almost like the guy's a heavy lounge skin beater. The groovy bass takes over the songs at times, and there are some solos as well. No vocals make this a musician's best friend, keeping the over the top elements right in your face to hear and dissect. I can picture lots of swirling lights and lava lamps while listening to this. This is pure unadulterated psychadelia, and probably the only disc I could

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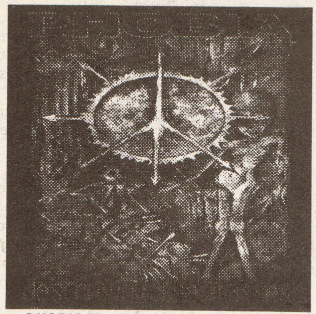

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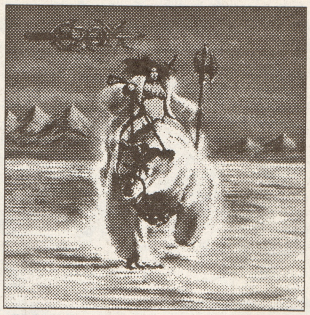

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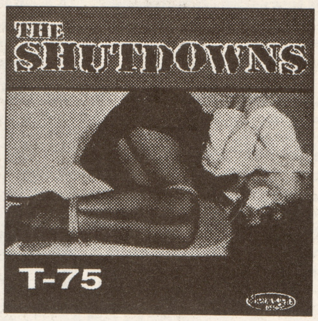
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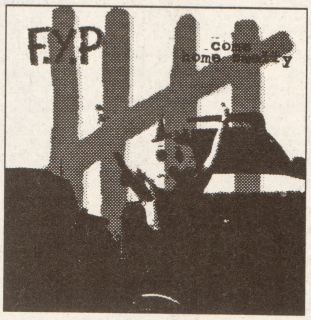
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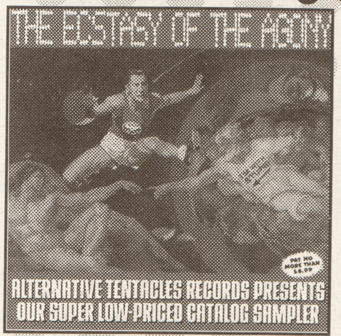
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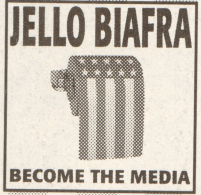
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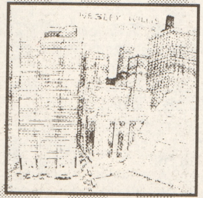
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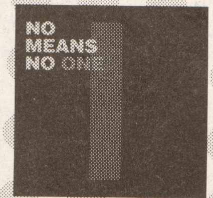
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recommend to everybody out there, including my dad.(CD)-**Myk**

Mockorange "I The Record Play" *(Lobster, POB 14731, Santa Barbara, CA 93102)*. This release took me by surprise. Mockorange specialize in bouncy yet lush Emo-flavored Indie Rock, very reminiscent of bands such as Sunny Day Real Estate and No Knife. All 10 cuts flow from one into another, thanks in part to a mixed bag of beautiful yet noisy at times guitar passages, memorable chorus parts and an overall vibe which reeks of Indie Rock success. Produced by the one and only Mark Trombino, this disc is very worthy of praise. 'Nuff said.(CD)-**Alex**

Mondo Generator "Cocaine Rodeo" *(Southern Lord, POB 291967, Los Angeles, CA 90029)*. Call him Rex Everything, call him Nick Olvieri, hell, call him crazy ('cause he is!), but Mondo Generator is his latest solo offering. And chances are, if you dig Nick Olvieri's work in all of his bands (Kyuss, The Dwarves, QOTSA), previous and current, then you'll not only get this CD, but it will instantly become one of your favorites. From the opener "13th Floor" (a souped up version appears as "Tension Head" on the new Queens of the Stone Age album), we see exactly where this rodeo is going. Spiraling into a Rock and Punk abyss chock full of musical anarchy and debauchery ("I Want You To Die"), Mondo Generator gives us the spirit of the Pistols, Nirvana, Iggy and all of the crazy Rock and Roll icons we've grown to fear and respect, all wrapped up into 10 songs that are as catchy as they are out of control ("Unless I Can Kill," "Simple Exploding Man"). With lewd lyrics and drug references a plenty, put this one on after the kids go to bed and put on your cowboy hat, partner, and join the cocaine rodeo!(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Morbid Angel "Gateways To Annihilation" *(Earache, 43 W. 38th St., 2nd Fl, New York, NY 10018)*. It's been a long time since I really felt Morbid Angel had done something different. The two albums on Giant and the *Formulas* discs were really just the band trying to live up to its past. That all comes to a grinding halt with *Gateways*... The band has taken a whole new approach to their music (or at least it seems that way). The single biggest problem with the last album was that it revolved around Trey's guitar wanking. We know he's a good guitar player, and we know he's written some of the most important Death Metal songs ever, but last album was just too self indulgent and consequently, boring. *Gateways*... seems to be written from the drums out. Every song features Pete Sandoval highly in the mix, and the prominent drums have become much more important in the songwriting process; just check out "Summoning Redemption," "Awakening," or "God Forsaken." It's a great change for the band, and really what they needed to break out of their funk. This is so good, I'd say it's Morbid Angel's best album since *Blessed Are the Sick*.(CD)-**Myk**

Morbid Angel "Gateways To Annihilation" *(Earache. 43 West 38th St.. 2nd Fl, New York, NY 10018)*. Florida's Morbid Angel are by far one of the best Death Metal bands in the universe, period. This point is further demonstrated on Morbid's latest which is there best release since 95's *Domination*. *Gateways To Annihilation* is the band's second disc with bassist/vocalist Steve Tucker and the end product here is one of the best "extreme Metal" discs released in 2000. Tracks like "I," "Summoning Redemption," and "God Of The Forsaken" feature extremely talented double kick drumming by the best in the biz, Peter Sandoval, and intensely vicious guitar work handled by Trey Azagthoth and Erik Rutan. Screaming guitar solos, textured chords and perfectly evil vocals can be found floating in the mix. Morbid Angel's musicianship as always is top notch and still keeps getting greater and greater with each passing release. Even more talented then bands in it's genre like Cannibal Corpse and Deicide, Morbid Angel once again proves why they're the best Metal band in existence.(CD)-**Alex**

Motorhead "The Best Of" *(Metal-Is, 1540 Broadway, New York, NY 10036)*. A double disc set of arguably the most essential music ever recorded. A set that spans the entire 25 years of the Motorhead monolith, and a track from Hawkwind. This set also features four previously unreleased tracks, and even a Sex Pistols cover. Even Girlschool makes two appearances here, one covering "Bomber" and one a collaboration. There isn't much to be said here. You know all these songs, and you have to own them. Just in case you think to yourself, well, I have all those songs; you're a poser. It's worth it along for the four extra songs alone. Enough said, Motorhead rules!(CD)-**Myk**

Motorhead "Over The Top: The Rarities" *(Castle, 1976 E. High St., Suite 101, Pottstown, PA 19464)*. What can be said about Motorhead? They're the greatest that ever was or will be. They're the one band that both metalheads and punks can agree has no equal. This is a collection for the real diehard fans. Gone are the "Ace of Spades" and "Iron Fist" tracks. Here you find alternate versions of Lemmy and company covering "Louie, Louie," instrumental versions of "Tear Em Down," and two different versions of "Over The Top." All this only comprises half of this disc, but it gives you an idea of the gems that are located here. This isn't the disc that will compel you to listen to Motorhead -- although I have no idea why you wouldn't -- but it is the must own for the people who can't get enough. It features some cool old photos and a decent mini history of the band in the liner notes. Not to mention it has the Motorhead/Girlschool track that was previously only available on vinyl.(CD)-**Myk**

Motorhead "The Chase Is Better Than The Catch: The Singles" *(Castle, 1976 E. High St., Suite 101, Pottstown, PA 19464)*. This is a collection of 24 tracks that spans all the singles released on the Bronze label. It is a two disc set that features all the cover art from the singles in the booklet. All the A sides you know. Songs like "Overkill" and "Ace Of Spades," but what makes this essential is the hard to get B-sides, many of which had never before been available on CD. There are several live tracks including a version of "Motorhead." Once again, this is a release for people who aren't collectors; it's all here in one set and you don't need a turntable. You know what? Even if you have the vinyl you'll want this set. Where else are you going to find all this together on two full length CDs? What a bargain!(CD)-**Myk**

The Movielife *(Revelation, POB 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232)*. This band's sound is what you'd get if you mixed ALL, Bad Religion and Blink 182 in a blender. I've never heard these guys before (although I've heard the name a lot) and was very impressed at the first listen. I highly recommend this CD, especially for fans of ALL.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Mylar *(Monotone, POB 20162, New York, NY 10014)*. Mylar is a four piece female Rock outfit from NYC that takes pages from the obvious (Babes In Toyland, Kittie) as well as the unexpected (Pink Floyd, Sabbath) to create a four song release that's going to leave a mark. From their punk attitude ("Noncohesive") to their Metal fretwork to the offbeat time signatures, these girls have got a lot going on inside each song. Harsh on the outside, Mylar also has a good feel for taking a step back and letting some tranquility take control before the audio onslaught ("Belligerent"). If you're looking for some riot girl rumblings, look somewhere else, but if you're looking for some aggressive female artists taking it up a notch, check out Mylar.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Nakatomi Plaza "By Chester Copper" *(BD, POB 860, New York, NY 10268-0860)*. With an album title and band name like that, you better kick some serious fucking ass. And they do...for the first 20 or so seconds. After the *Die Hard* quote, the band thrashes for like 20 seconds and I get all excited. Then they turn alternative or Emo, whatever the fuck you want to call it. I'm not into it, but they don't do it too bad. Then there are song titles like "Bottle Full of Jesus" and "Good Friday." The song titles aren't in the song, so ya might as well change them. How about "Holly McClean's Small Hairy Gruber" or "Carl Winslow is A Pussy"? On a lot of tracks they build up to a decent speed, then slow down. They should stay at that speed and scream more. Emo screams are cool, just add more. On "I Watched A Baby Squirrel Fall From A Tree And Die," someone is screaming lyrics, but not into a mic. It sounds fucking cool. With a sound like this, I bet they have legions of fans.(CD)-**Corporate Whore**

Napalm Death "Leaders And Followers" *(Relapse, 1720 State Rd, Upper Darby, PA 19082)*. A six song EP from Napalm Death? Why not, they have done several ep's over their career. That's how they keep their fans interested and Rabid. Napalm Death, despite all their line up changes and the "sound" change they have endured over the years, is still highly recognized as one of the true Godfathers of Grindcore. So, let's do a tribute record! It's fitting right? Well, that is exactly what this is, a tribute album. But it isn't a bunch of bands you never heard of doing half-assed versions of ND classics just to be heard by labels. This is Napalm doing tribute to the bands they feel made them and it features some expected and unexpected bands. Raw Power, the classic Italian Punk band, the original Slaughter, Pentagram (definitely unexpected), Death whose Chuck is widely renowned as a Death Metal pioneer, and the Dead Kennedys, a song Napalm has been doing for years but probably believed just belonged amongst this collection. All the songs are fast and heavy, the vocals are toned down a little to try and keep the original integrity of the song, while still truly being Napalm Death. It is a fun collection, much like the Slayer Punk record. It's something I will probably listen to often in the future. A timeless band doing timeless classics.(CD)-**Myk**

Napalm Death "Leaders Not Followers" *(Relapse, POB 2060, Upper Darby, PA 19082)*. I must salute Napalm Death for releasing this brutal six song EP which finds these Death/Grind legends unleashing a collection of covers. Whether it's the speedier re-working of Death's "Back From The Dead" or the plain ole' bizarre yet successful cover of The Dead Kennedy's "Nazi Punks Fuck Off," all of the almost 20 minutes on this CD will make any Napalm fan drool with delight. As with any previous effort, expect a ton of pulverizing blast beats, scorching guitar work and those trademark growls courtesy of Barney Greenway. Rumour has it this is Hillary Clinton's favorite disc to listen to when she does morning yoga.(CD)-**Alex**

Nashville Pussy "High As Hell" *(TVT, 23 E 4th St., New York, NY 10003)*. Corey and Ruyter look perty, Blaine and Jeremy like err... Southern. Nashville Pussy rocks to begin with and covering the Rick Sims song "She's Got The Drugs"? That's hot, children... Nice booklet!(CD)-**Darren**

The New Mexikans *(gnyctv@aol.com)*. The New Mexikans are a heavy, trippy quartet hailing from Brooklyn with feet are firmly planted in the Black Sabbath meets Pink Floyd world of Rock. With a Hard Rock swagger and a psychedelic backbeat, these Rock revolutionaries show a lot of promise on their three song sampler. Melodically crunchy with tinges of Zeppelin-esque majesty, swirling riffs and a heavy rhythm section lead this band's supercharged post Gr*nge angst fest ("Paradise"). Check them out to get a sense that Rock continues to grow and adapt to the ever-changing world around us.(Cassette)-**MikeSOS**

The New Morty Show "Rigormorty" *(Slimstyle, 3400 E. Speedway, Suite 118-272, Tucson, AZ 85716)*. This just looks and sounds like a loungy, laid back cocktail Jazz record. A cover of Cole Porter's "Just One Of Those Things"... that's nice... A cover of Poison's "Unskinny Bop"? The New Morty Show kick ass.(CD)-**Darren**

Neurosis "Sovereign" *(Neurot, POB 410209, San Francisco, CA 94141)*. Neurosis deemed it necessary to start their own label. They felt they had projects that labels couldn't do justice. It's hard to argue when you figure in Neurosis, Tribes Of Neurot, and Steve Von Till's new solo stuff. Factor into the equation that Neurosis likes a bunch of bands that either don't have record deals, or have been mistreated by one along the way. Who better than to release those records than one of the most notable names in the underground? *Sovereign* is the first Neurosis release for Neurot recording. It is a four song, long EP. It also features CD-ROM material for your computer, as well as a special link to their website, a page that can only be accessed through the CD link. The disc comes in a nice fat digi-pack, as do most of the Neurot releases to date. The music on the disc is distinctly Neurosis, but it is all of the mellower nature. You will not find the bombastic Metal of *Through Silver and Blood* or *Times Of Grace*. These tracks are more like the free form songs that the band does live, very intense, and featuring all the tribal percussion that has made Neurosis so different over the years. There are the weird horn sounds, as well as what appears to be a rain stick at times. The songs are more about the primitive than anything else, and there is no band more primitive than Neurosis. I don't need to tell Neurosis fans to get this. They'll have it by the time this is even printed. But for you novices, this disc would be a nice way to easy yourself into the tumultuous world that is Neurosis.(CD)-**Myk**

Nevermore "Dead Heart In A Dead World" *(Century Media, 1453-A 14th St. #324, Santa Monica, CA 90404)*. Technical and crafty, Nevermore's latest is a metallic masterpiece which combines melody and brutality into one entity. Part Queensryche and part Pantera, Nevermore blend groove oriented Metal with Thrash flavorings and Progressive Rock elements which all come together to create one heck of a songwriting monster. Songs like "Narcosynthesis" and "Inside Four Walls" demonstrate this band's knack for tight musicianship and breaking down musical boundaries. Clocking in at nearly 60 minutes, *Dead Heart In A Dead World* will put a smile on any metalhead's face.(CD)-**Alex**

Nocturnal Rites "Afterlife" *(Century Media, 1453-A 14th St. #324, Santa Monica, CA 90404)*. Nocturnal Rites sheds their Metal garb and concentrates on playing some kick ass melodic Metal on their latest 10 track release. This Swedish sextet specializes in playing straight up Metal a la Maiden and Helloween ("The Sinner's Cross") complete with melodic vocals over guitar riff driven arrangements. Never going past the danger level on the Cheese-o-meter, Nocturnal Rites stays the course of delivering meaty melodic Metal ("Sacrifice") without posing, primping or pandering to the audience. If you'd like to hear a band that rocks like Dream Theater without the incessant soloing, then these guys are perfect for you.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

NoMeansNo "ONE" *(Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092)*. I thought these guys were a Punk band, but they sounded more like Rush, till the vocals came in... then it was Zappa-esqe, in a weird and freaky way. This sort of reminds me of Hammerhead, but a very light version of 'em. Musically, this is amazing, but I can't get by the deep but dark crooning Les Claypool-like vocals.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Nothingface "Violence" *(TVT, 23 E 4th St., New York, NY 10003)*. Nothingface come out swinging once again on their sophomore effort, a 12 track bruiser of an album that is bound to leave marks as well as a lasting impression in your brain ("Hidden Hands"). This Mid-Atlantic quartet once again utilizes a steady stream of Metal riffs and impassioned vocals to hammer your eardrums and provide some very endearing moments ("Can't Wait For Violence"), and enduring buildups that explode into pit dancing madness ("For All The Sin"). Dynamic as they are bone crushing, Nothingface is one of the new Metal bands that maps out a blueprint for all the new jacks to follow; keep it heavy, keep it interesting and above all, keep it real. If you like your Metal full of peaks and valleys as well as extremely heavy yet surprisingly melodic, Nothingface's latest is something worth you looking into.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Orphee *(Projekt, POB 166155, Chicago, IL 60616)*. Orphee seems to be a celebration of the character

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Orpheus. There are liner notes from Neil Gaiman describing his take on Orpheus, and there are other notes from Projekt's Sam Rosenthal. The packaging is very attractive, as Projekt releases always are, but the important part is the music. Orphee boasts 13 of the most notable names in the Goth/ ambient field. Sam's Black Tape For A Blue Girl, Audra, Unto Ashes, Dead Can Dance's Peter Ulrich, David Sylvian, and Christian Death are just some of the names here. All of the tracks are released, or soon will be. Projekt has done a great job procuring these artists from their respective labels. Fortunately for Sam (unlike the Metal and Punk labels to some degree), the goth community seem to fall over themselves trying to co-operate. Maybe they respect the strength of a strong scene. This disc is beautiful and atmospheric, a true enjoy to listen to.(CD)-**Myk**

Pacific Boy Standing "The Trip" *(www.pacificboystanding.com)*. Pacific Boy Standing is an alternative Rock quartet from Queens whose 10 track disc would fit right in on a WB teenage drama series. With just the right amount of jangle in the guitar ("Diffusion") and contained angst melded into some well versed four minute pop songs ("OuttaLuck"), PBS has got what it takes to take the college Rock scene by storm ("Cinderella Kiss"). Very middle of the road, yet very well done, Pacific Boy Standing mixes the early energy of REM with the straightforward nature of the Gin Blossoms to provide the world with yet another pop Rock band that can rock the block.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

The Party Of Helicopters "Mt. Forever" *(Troubleman Unlimited. 16 Willow St.. Bayonne, NJ 07002)*. This abstract poppy-noise act is pretty solid on the guitar end of things. The uptempo beat also keeps things flying around, as well as interesting. Something about this makes me think this is Punk Rock's answer to Blue Oyster Cult. File this under Post-Hardcore (and I hate that term).(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Paw "Home Is A Strange Place" *(Koch, 740 Broadway. New York, NY 10003)*. Remember Paw, the Midwest Rock band that drew comparisons to Pearl Jam? Yeah, the guys who sang about the dolphin...that's the band. Well, they've returned after an unexplained absence with a new seven song offering that's just as unexplainable as their absence. While they retain their Eddie Vedder snarl and alternative twanging yet equally banging guitar work ("Naiad"), they take some unexpected musical twists and turns that leave you going "What the hell was that all about?" From the sitar flavored "Into The Woods" to the acoustically ambient "Oily Rags," Paw leaves the impression that they're in search of a new direction. Despite all the soul searching, the Lawrence, Kansas boys still show us that they can keep the Gr*nge scene alive with might ("Home Is A Strange Place"). Paw proves that even though the early '90s Rock scene may be "un-hip," there's still some bands left from the era biding their time and waiting for the next wave to crash upon these marketable shores.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Potshot "Til I Die" *(Asian Man, POB 35585, Monte Sereno, CA)*. Japanese Ska Punk, eh? Yep, we're not talking about karaoke here, folks. Potshot is their name, and they play a mean style of Ska Punk that gives Rancid and Catch 22 a run for their money. Despite the cheesy vocals (hey, English is a hard language, folks), these guys show that they understand the language of music. With their super tight riffs and full scale horn assault, Potshot keeps the songs bouncy and short, and keeps your attention span by doing so ("Are You Satisfied?," "Do You Laugh At Me?") Despite the song redundancy after mid disc, these guys are adventurous (even delving into Reggae with "#3"), and the guitar work is top notch. Worth a spin for the left of center skanker.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Pro-Pain "Round 6" *(Spitfire, 101 Bay Ave., Hicksville, NY, 11801)*. Ding, ding ding! Here we go again, folks, a real barnburner is about to go down. Pro-Pain's latest is another chapter in the book "How To Continuously Write The Same Batch of Songs for Six Albums and Get Away With It" (written by Lemmy, of course!) But I'll be damned if these Noo Yawkers don't beat the hell out of you with their rapid fire riffs and Gary Meskill's razor sharp growl ("Make Some Noise"). Despite their foray into Helmet-esque melody ("Substance"), Pro-Pain packs 13 high octane, fist throwing anthems that crossover into the Hardcore/Metal category with the greatest of ease ("Thall Shall Not," "Fed Up"). If you're familiar with these guys, you'll love this disc. And even if you're looking for something in between the rage of Hatebreed and the catchiness of Offspring, this will suit the need. Judging by the sheer power of *Round 6*, Pro-Pain is primed to be one of the few bands that'll be pounding it out until they decide they've had enough, and that alone speaks volumes.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Puny Human "Revenge Is Easy" *(Small Stone. POB 02007, Detroit, MI 48202)*. This album is very Rock and Roll and very Metal. While these guys are probably good at what they do, I'm rather uninterested. The music is not bad, but this guy's voice doesn't go with it at all. He is trying to sound mean or something, sometimes like Rob Zombie, while at other times like that prick from Metallica. Actually, the more I listen to it, the more Heavy Metal it sounds. Another thing... They have a really cool song title like "Eating Cigarettes," then a lame one like "Way Of the Intercepting Fist." I think the hidden track is an Aerosmith song (I'm not positive), but it's the most kick ass song on here! The song "Jimbo the Hut" has a bad ass R&R riff, and some really cool keyboard action, but I just can't get into this guy's voice. Maybe you can.(CD)-**Corporate Whore**

The Putrid Flowers ."..and For the Little Children, Sing" *(244-20 88th Rd, Bellrose, NY 11426)*. The Putrid Flowers are a poppy power punk outfit from Queens that contain all the best Punk had to offer, from the melodicism of ALL ("If I Could Just...") to the raw power of Hanoi Rocks or The Stooges ("21"). On their 18 track release, this quartet show that they are as solid as they come, mixing the best of Punk Rock and Pop Rock to create a sound as catchy as a cold in autumn ("New World"). Very tight songwriting that borders on show tunes revelries, TPF rock out in a fun way, not unlike Cheap Trick or a more mature Blink 182 ("Madeline, Again"). Bonus points go to the boys for tying up all loose ends with their CD ending medley, encompassing reprises of all the previous songs. In short, these guys are clever and they rock, and when you're doing Punk Rock, what else do you really need? Find this album and pick it up; you'll be glad you did.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Radical Noise "Plan-B" *(Hammer, Muhurdar Cad. Akmar Pas. 70/12 Kadikoy 81300 Istanbul, Turkey)*. These guys out of Istanbul, Turkey play Hardcore. Excellent musicianship makes every song solid. The tempo is fast-paced, the vocals screechy and throaty, which makes for a brutal, powerful Metal -Hardcore hybrid. Three songs are in Turkish.(CD)-**Chris Munity**

Radiohead "Kid A" *(Capitol)*. Let me first say that the packaging for this CD is something that all bands should think about. It probably cost Capitol a bunch of money, but it's definitely worth it. The packaging sets the tone for the newest CD by Radiohead, who play musical landscapes that are art. It's definitely something to listen to when you want to float in space and drift off. There are no real standout "singles" here, just a full CD of very spacey, simple music. Using the standard drums, bass, guitars and vocals, plus the occasional keyboard-like sound, Radiohead made an avant-garde CD that for years to come will have many fans saying changed their lives. Like the Beatles' White Album, this is Radiohead's experiment with sounds and technology. Definitely not for the "Creep" fans.(CD)-**Jack**

Rancid *(Hellcat/Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles. CA 90026)*. Wasn't Rancid's first full-length CD self-titled? Anyway, it looks like the boys dropped the Ska and Reggae and tried to go back to those earlier self-titled days when they had a 7"s on Lookout and Fat. This is a little reminder for the new jack fans of Rancid that they actually were a **Punk** not a Ska/Reggae band. This CD is a lot more Hardcore then anything they've done. Lars screams his head off. There's a bunch of really short songs too. This sounds like Kill Your Idols would if they were from the East Bay. Out of the 22 tracks, "It's Quite Alright" is the one that sticks out the most, and happens to be my favorite. Catch these dudes on tour this fall with AFI and the Distillers.(CD)-**Chris Munity**

Raven "All For One" "Wiped Out" "Rock Until You Drop" *(Spitfire, 101 Bay Ave., Hicksville, NY, 11801)*. The first three Raven records have finally been re-issued and all feature three bonus tracks. The packaging is reproduced perfectly, and the bonus tracks, which culled from hard to get singles including the Raven/Udo 7" which is on the *All For One* disc. *Wiped Out* features the *Crash, Bang, Wallop* EP as bonus tracks and *Rock Until You Drop* features the *Wiped Out* ep. Each of the three discs features a bio on one member of the band, sort of a mug shot picture with pertinent info. It's very well conceived. The sound quality is superb on all three discs, all featuring lyrics, great photos, and liner notes in the booklets. This are re-issues for collectors as much as for fans. With the resurgence of Raven on Metal Blade, and the band touring again, these couldn't have come at a better time. There is a love put into the repackaging and remastering. I would have to highly recommend these discs even to people who have them already, as they definitely sound better than any previously released versions. I only had the vinyl, so this is a total treat for me. The first in a series of classic reissues for Spitfire.(CD)-**Myk**

Redline "Moments of Truth" *(Black Pumpkin, POB 4377, Rivers Edge NJ, 07661)*. Redline is a New Jersey quintet that bleeds Hardcore. On their 10 song disc, these guys show that they have got the chops to take you down and out for the count ("Instinct"). A little bit of tough guy roughhousing mixed in with good breakdowns and a twin guitar attack that rarely fails to make its mark ("Diseased"), Redline takes the streets straight to you, whether you like it or not. Uncompromisingly heavy and merciless; who'd think Hardcore like it came out of New Jersey? Strong stuff for the Hardcore kid in all of us.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Retarded *(Hang Over, Viale G. D'Annunzio 9, 20123 Milano, Italy)*. This is Italy's own version of the Ramones, but the vocals are a little harsher, kinda like the Riverdales or Screeching Weasel. Fans of the Queers and the Mr. T Experience will rejoice as well. Now, take a nap in the middle of the day, and when you wake up try finding this CD in your local, cooler record store.(CD)-**Chris Munity**

Retina *(www.retinanyc.com)*. Retina is a NYC outfit that takes the current K-Rock sound and makes it interesting with deep grooves that were born from the NYC Rock scene a la Circus of Power and Warrior Soul ("Peel The Shade"). While their rhythm pounds you from the inside, the soulful vocals and massive guitar point to today's rockers such as Creed and Godsmack ("Crutch"). Definitely worth a trip if you like it heavy and melodic a la Black Label Society, Nickelback and the like.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

River City Rebels "Racism, Religion, and War" *(Victory, 346 North Justine, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607)*. This is one of those records that has to be taken in context. River City Rebels is an above average Ska Punk band that sounds like a mix between the Dropkick Murphys and Less Than Jake. Sounds kind of generic doesn't it? Here's where the context part comes in: the average age of the band's members is 18... half of them are still in high school. If you take that into consideration and then factor in that the music is not the most original conceptually, you have a brilliant record. These kids are destined for greatness. If they can go toe to toe with the genre heavy weights at 18, they will be ruling the scene in no time. It's really uptempo stuff with fairly well thought out lyrics and a great concept of the Street Punk and Ska sounds in their separate forms. By far, more an album you would expect on either Epitaph or Asian Man, but it is Victory who scores with the early discovery. Hey, if you buy it now you can say "I was there when..."(CD)-**Myk**

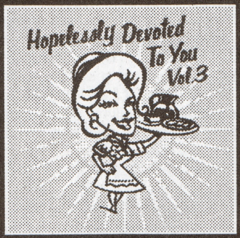
Rod Webber "Burned My Feet On Meat Street" *(www.psychicaudio.com)*. Solo artist deluxe Rod Webber is one of those Trip-Hop heroes that knows how to drive a beat home. On his 10 track release, Webber implements the current method of groove found on many of the hottest dance floors across our great nation and meshes this with some offbeat noises and some Rock and Roll pretenses to create a very enticing and entrancing collection of tracks ("Paler"). Mix this with a little E and a glow stick, and damn, you'll be raving all night long! Despite Webber's merits to the drug counterculture, this Massachusetts native is an adept songster, meshing some late '60's Beatles trippiness with some of today's block rocking beats ("Get In The Bag") to create a sound that fans of Fatboy Slim, Beck and the ilk would jam on.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Rotten Sound "Still Psycho" *(Death Vomit, 136 Lawrence St, Ste 3A, Brooklyn, NY 11201)*. First off, you know I had to love this band. The cover art is taken from Lucio Fulci's *Zombie* movie poster. That scores immediate points with me. Rotten Sound play a very progressive Death Metal. There are breakdowns as in Florida Metal, and there are complicated guitar riffs as in Gothenberg Metal, and there's a drummer that can play at the speed of light. The vocalist sounds like a more throaty version of the vocalist from Dark Tranquility, and the band does a Carcass cover on this all new EP. It's very heavy and in your face. This is the first release the band has done through Necropolis/ Death Vomit and it is also the first official release in the States. Their last full-length came through Repulse records, which has a US office but I don't believe they have proper distribution. This is a punishing introduction into our country, and I look for a positive future from these guys.(CD)-**Myk**

Rotten Sound "Still Psycho" *(Necropolis, POB 14815, Fremont, CA 94539)*. Rotten Sound put the drummer on 220 bpm and just go! Very fast Grind Metal is what this Finnish five piece seeks out to accomplish, and damn if they don't knock your teeth in trying. Drawing inspiration from such luminaries as Napalm Death, RS will blast you out of your chair with their lightning fast deliveries and true Metal flare ("Strong Man"). If this six song EP is any indication, we won't be hearing the last of these Metal mavens. If you like it fast and crusty, look no further.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Rotting Christ "Khronos" *(Century Media, 1453-A 14th St. #324, Santa Monica, CA 90404)*. Those who are not keen on change beware! This is like no other Rotting Christ record you have ever heard. Dark (even by their standards), heavy, fast, and most of all Swedish! Moving from the fabled Woodhouse studios to the infamous Abyss studios has put a major change into the mindset of RC More keyboards but mixed way in the back at times almost sounding like Satyricon. The vocals have that swallowed glass Black Metal feel, as opposed to the more Death like quality that has always been a part of RC. The guitar riffs are much more fluid and the progressions much more complicated, really demonstrating the true talent of the band; it's very similar to what Soilwork is doing, but not quite as fast. There is also one of those hidden tracks at the end that you have to wade through five minutes of silence to get to. This is one of, if not my favorite, RC records since the very beginning. It is powerful and well written. The recording is amazing and the songs are truly heartfelt (as heartfelt as Metal can get anyway) and apparently after some incidents on a bad South American tour, the music is just plain pissed off, a quality many bands lose, and in so doing lose a dimension of their music. This is just a killer piece of grinding Death/Black Metal that cannot be avoided. They are back from the direction that Paradise Lost has gone and have found a nastier way to express themselves.(CD)-**Myk**

Rotting Christ "Khronos" *(Century Media, 1453-A 14th St. #324, Santa Monica, CA 90404)*. The Greek Death Metal veterans Rotting Christ return with a new 12 track offering that mixes together all of the musical pathways the band has traveled down to create the most complete and possibly most brutal RC album to date. Very indicative of the gothic Metal movement currently manipulating Europe, RC take their brutal rhythms and vocals and add touches of keyboards and background sounds to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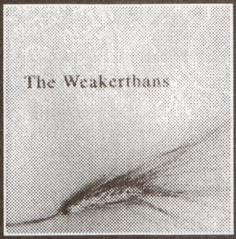
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create a bleak, dark atmosphere ("You Are I"). Despite adding these nuances, this Grecian quintet shows that they still have a blast beat buried deep in their heart somewhere ("Thou Art Blind"). If you like these guys or the whole underground Black Metal movement, this is a good disc to get your hands on.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Runnin' Riot "Reclaim the Streets" *(TKO, 4104 24th St., #103, San Francisco, CA 94114)*. I've found that the best Street Punk these days is from Europe, but for the most part it has always been. It's no surprise that Runnin' Riot, from Ireland, kicks ass with a 12 track foot stomp that features a live set as bonus tracks. Songs about drinking, fighting, football, and the cops are spread all through this album. The production is great, but avoids being overproduced. There is still plenty of distortion and a lot of anger. The vocals sort of remind me of a subdued Choke from Slapshot. The guitars have a very bright sound that overshadow the drums and bass a little. This is a very compelling Punk record with a lot of heart and a true Oi! feeling.(CD)-**Myk**

Sacred Steel "Bloodlust" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St., PMB 302, Simi Valley, CA 93065)*. This is one of those records I hate to review. The music is Power Metal in the purest form, with racing guitars, epic riffs, and light-hearted, almost Viking-esque, double kick drums. The choruses boast of battles and gods. It's the kind of record that makes Metal fun... that is, until you hear the vocalist. This guy is fucking awful. He has very limited range and a certain inflection that is just silly. It's the same inflection that Eddie Murphy uses when he imitates a white guy. He is so bad that I can't listen to the record at all. It's a true shame, because if this was a Joe Satriani record (aka instrumental) it would be a truly epic piece. At times Sacred Steel uses some Death style vocals that aren't so bad, but those parts are few and far between. I can't say anything good about this record while the band allows a butcher...uh, vocalist... like this to ruin all their good work.(CD)-**Myk**

Sacred Steel "Bloodlust" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St. PMB 302, Simi Valley CA 93065)*. Ever wonder what happened to the days where Metal was a type of music that told stories of war and death and salvation, almost like a steroid induced Shakespeare story, while a band backed up the singer's tales with anthemic opuses that took a near majestic tone? Sacred Steel still lives under this guise, and their latest 10 track disc is a testament to their stance. *Bloodlust* tells a story of all of these things, and the music is just as anthemic as any third rate Maiden clone. While Sacred Steel's brand of Power Metal may be considered passe, their chops are well noted and the voice is distinct, albeit sounding a bit like Geddy Lee with a cold. If you dig Metal the old fashioned way, then be sure to pick up Sacred Steel's latest.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Samiam "Astray" *(Hopeless, POB 7495, Van Nuys, CA 91409)*. Rarely will Darren commend an album for the artwork and photography contained within its the packaging, but this is one of those. Otherwise you've got a disc of music that borderlines between Emo, Power Pop, and radio-friendly Punk Rock. Some snappy stuff, yeah, but it surprises me since I've heard Samiam's last live shows were weak. Hopefully I'll be able to check them out on my own, but if Tim O'Heir is producing them there's obviously something very special about Samiam. Rock on, Rock soldiers... or something.(CD)-**Darren**

Sanctus "Aeon Sky" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St., PMB 302, Simi Valley, CA 93065)*. Black Metal seems to becoming more and more widespread in the United States. Sanctus hails from California, and plays a style that is similar in mindset to Darthrone. It's isn't total blistering Black Metal ala *De Mysteria*, but yet it isn't Death Metal either. Very much like the *Soulside* Darthrone album, *Aeon Sky* boasts parts from both genres. There are keyboards on this, similar to new school Black Metal bands, and the recording quality is better than your average album. This record brings together some of the best parts of three excellent genres, not making any of them secondary. The thing that makes this most impressive is that it's the band's debut. They combine all these factors like seasoned veterans while just barely cutting their teeth. This record is a real pioneering effort well worth checking out.(CD)-**Myk**

Schema *(5RC, POB 1190, Olympia, WA 98507-1190)*. Nothing like boring, feedback-ridden bands with songs never running less than five minutes. End your life please, Sonic Youth fan.(CD)-**Darren**

The Scotchgreens "Draw!" *(Cargo, 4901-906 Morena Blvd, San Diego, CA 92117)*. You've got that Dick Dale-esque tone of the guitar into that bad-ass stuff that's somewhere in-between the Reverend Horton Heat, The Refreshments and Los Straitjackets. I guess it's country-fried Surf music? Regardless, I'm digging it 100% despite my usual hatred towards people speaking with phone drawls... Yeehaw!(CD)-**Darren**

Selby Tigers "Charm City" *(Hopeless, POB 7495, Van Nuys, CA 91409-7495)*. Girl/guy singing indie pop that does nothing for me. Very annoying tones make me want to turn it off. The music performance is good; at least they know how to play, but it's way too light sounding. It needs more **oomph!** Next!(CD)-**Jack**

Society's Finest "The Journey... So Far" *(Solid State, POB 12698, Seattle, WA 98111)*. Great name, cool art, stupid and unnecessary Metal... (CD)-**Darren**

Sentenced "Crimson" *(Century Media, 1453-A 14th St. #324, Santa Monica, CA 90404)*. Sentenced are the rage in Europe. They play a Metallica black album style Metal . The biggest difference is that the vocalist, Ville, can actually sing. He doesn't have that post growl throaty voice that marks Hetfield these days. The music is also a little slower and more moody. They don't play pop, they still play Metal and take pride in it. There are instrumental parts that are reminiscent of Paradise Lost, and you can see some of the roots that also must have influenced fellow Finn's Babylon Whores. If nothing else, Sentenced share that musicianship that seems to be overflowing from Scandinavia. Light hearted Goth-Metal meets Metallica for fans of any bands previously mentioned.(CD)-**Myk**

Serpent Obscene *(Necropolis, POB 14815, Fremont, CA 94539)*. What we have here are nine tracks of diesel powered mayhem brought to you courtesy of Serpent Obscene who hail from the land of ABBA, err.. umm.. I mean Sweden. This band definitely bridges the gap between Thrash and Death Metal. Most songs feature Death/Pestilence influenced axework and vocal growls. This could've easily been recorded in '88 or '89. Not bad.(CD)-**Alex**

Serpent Obscene *(Necropolis, POB 14815, Fremont, CA 94539)*. Serpent Obscene is a pretty straightforward Death Metal band that takes it right to you without any retribution. On their nine track disc, this Scandinavian quintet take the glory days of 80's Thrash and mix it up with some melodic Death Metal to create quite the palatable din ("Rapid Fire," "Evil Rites"). Any fan of Metallica's pre-Black album or Testament will definitely appreciate Serpent Obscene's loyalty to the Metal community, as well as their cymbal crashing, headbanging riffs. Their lyrical content and overall intellectuality aside, if it were 1987 again, these guys would give the Big Four (Anthrax, Megadeth, Metallica and Slayer) a run for their money. In the year 2000, at least they give us something to remember the past with that's not too cheesy or stupid.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Shaft "Quint" *(Evil Teen, POB 651, Village Station, New York, NY 10014)*. Ten songs that sound very much like Helmet. These repetitive riffs will piledrive your head into the wall. From the photo insert, these guys look like they can be candidates for the WWF. I'm not really into this kind of Hardcore so I wasn't into Shaft. But if you're in the mood for a second-rate Helmet...word!(CD)-**Chris Munity**

Sheavy "Celestial Hi-Fi" *(TMC, POB 629, Port Washington, NY 11050)*. I remember thinking that Sheavy's first CD was a piece of crap. The vocals were all wrong and the music was mediocre. I don't know if they read my review or if other people agreed with me, but this is a whole new band! If you were to take Black Sabbath and Wytchfinder General, mix them up in a blender, this is what you would come up with. This is like *Masters of Reality* meets *Friends Of Hell*. Throw in some good old-fashioned Garage Rock/Alice Cooper for attitude, and you have a brilliant album. I am totally blown away by the progression this band has made, and now can't wait to see what they do next. With some bands it takes time to find themselves. Well, I'm not sure who Sheavy found, but it isn't the band of old. This band could be the next rulers of the Stoner/Doom world.(CD)-**Myk**

Shutdown "Few and Far Between" *(Victory, POB 146546, Chicago, IL 60614)*. My, the Shutdown boys have grown. Brooklyn's favorite sons and one of the few and proud bands left that has the right to carry the NYHC flag come back with their sophomore release. The 12 track *Few and Far Between* picks up right where their summertime EP left off. Chugging riffs and extremely tight rhythms ("Saving Face," "Eyes Wide Open") are a Shutdown trademark, as are some of the most inventive and best breakdowns going, and this album is no exception to that rule ("Few And Far Between," "No Compromise"). Produced by legendary NYHC scenester Roger Miret (Agnostic Front) and featuring guest vocals from such NYHC luminaries as Jon and Mike Scondotto (Synthetic 16 and Inhuman), Sal Sworn Enemy and Freddie Madball, while it reads like a *Who's Who* in Hardcore, this album is 100% Shutdown and 100% amazing. The scariest thing about it all is that this band is just starting to come into their own. For those that like guitar-driven Hardcore that's inventive and intense with a positive message, Shutdown is a must have.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Sig Transit Gloria "2 > 8 > 00" *(Johann's Face, POB 479164, Chicago, IL 60647)*. These guys sound like The Get Up Kids but with keyboards, which would sort of put them in the Doogie Howser/Atom and His Package category. I like this, probably because it has a good energy and a wacky dissonance from the keyboards.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Slab "Descension" *(Release/Relapse, POB 2060, Upper Darby, PA 19082)*. *Descension* is a brilliant re-release of groundbreaking Industrial, danceable mayhem from 1987. This outfit hailing from England never really took flight outside of the UK, but this collection of gritty yet groove driven noise will appeal to any follower of such acts like Godflesh, Big Black and *Land of Rape and Honey* era Ministry. All 12 tracks are a proverbial journey into an abyss of layered, detuned guitars, fuzzy basslines, robotic vocals and a maelstrom of moody keyboards and dub like drones. Tracks like "Flirt," "Dr. Bombay," and "Undriven Snow" will send orgasms throughout your noise craving eardrums. Considering when this recording took place, I must mention that these lads seemed very advanced and way ahead of their peers. Purchase this or die!(CD)-**Alex**

Slender "Haunted Radio" *(Guapo, POB 54, Salt Lake City, UT 84110)*. Slender is a power Pop Punk outfit from Salt Lake City, of all places! These hefty lads have got a lot of good hands in their 11 track mix, like Blag Dahlia (Dwarves), and their 80's metal flare meets bad boy stomp ("Big River") is a pretty strong concoction that's sure to evoke a reaction. Gutter Rock and Roll with hook aplenty and some biting lyrical content ("Plumber John," ."08," "Pleasanton") is what these guys have in store for the unsuspecting listener. Imagine Elvis Costello writing Bad Religion anthems and this is what Slender delivers ("Half-Assed"). Worth a spin for the mature punk rocker in you.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Slim Cessna's Auto Club "Always Say Please And Thank You" *(Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092)*. I hate to say it, but this is really bad. It sounds like Roy Orbison crooning with a bunch of dogs in a back alley with an accordion. For the Country music fan in you, or maybe your dad.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Sodom "Persecution Mania/Expurse Of Sodomy and In The Sign Of Evil/Obsessed By Cruelty" *(SPV, 344 Dutch Neck Rd, POB 360, East Windsor, NJ 08520)*. This is an amazing re-release box set of all the essential Sodom releases. It is a two-disc set that comes in a slipcase holder. On each CD are featured one EP and one full-length. These releases are the exact same as the European pressings, but released in the States domestically for the first time. *In The Sign of Evil* is Sodom's first and heaviest release by this seminal German Thrash band. It is partnered with the *Obsessed By Cruelty* full-length for one of the most face smashing collections ever. The *Persecution Mania* disc is the full length plus the 12" that is more commonly know as *Sodomy and Lust*. The interesting this about this disc is that it only has a song listing of 16 tracks, but there are 18 songs. I'm not sure the origin of the other two tracks, but more for your money is always good. *Persecution Mania* was Sodom's real breakout album. It is less heavy than the early recordings, but it was their best song writing to date, maybe ever, in addition to an amazing cover of Motorhead's "Iron First." There is no doubt that if you even remotely like '80's Thrash, this is a must own collection. Nicely packaged by SPV for convenience as much as musical enjoyment.(CD)-**Myk**

Sodom "Marooned Live" *(SPV, 344 Dutch Neck Rd, POB 360, East Windsor, NJ 08520)*. This is sort of like *Mortal Way Of Live* part two. With the exception of "Outbreak Of Evil," this live opus begins with the *Agent Orange* album. Sound-wise it's probably superior to Sodom's earlier live work, but as for track selection, I'll take *Mortal*... any day. I think the first half of Sodom's career was more impressive and more influential than the second. While they hit a soft spot with *Agent* and a couple other albums, the newest works feature a return to the sheer brutality that made Sodom famous. All the Angelripper banter on these songs is in German because originally this was a German only release, so be aware if that is a turn off to you. A solidly constructed live record consisting of 23 tracks including a reworked version of "Bombenhagel." The booklet is packed full of tour photos that will please even the passive fan, but the liner notes are in German. For the completist, and a good way for someone interested in the later years of Sodom to hear the new tracks, as the live versions often feature power that the studio has lost.(CD)-**Myk**

Sodom "Get What You Deserve" *(SPV, 344 Dutch Neck Rd, POB 360, East Windsor, NJ 08520)*. This album was originally released in 1994, and came out during a period when I refused to listen to this band. I had been so put off by their last couple of efforts I had no interest, but there was a lot going on I wasn't aware of. The band was trying to get back to their roots. They had written a song about "Jabba the Hut."... how could I not be interested being a total *Star Wars* geek? They also went back and did a cover of Venom's "Angel Dust." I would compare this to Celtic Frosts *Vanity Nemesis*; it was better than that horrid *Cold Lake*, but it wasn't *To Mega Therion*. This record is a step in the right direction after *Agent Orange*, but it isn't *Persecution Mania*. Once again Sodom releases an album that has to have the cover censored; the original art is included here, but there is a slip in cover plate in front of it. This album is okay, and great for completists, but still not in the top five Sodom discs I would recommend.(CD)-**Myk**

Soulless "The Darkening of Days" *(taognatas6@aol.com)*. Soulless is a brutal five piece Death Metal outfit that relies on speed more than depth to hammer their pointed scepters in to your unrelenting

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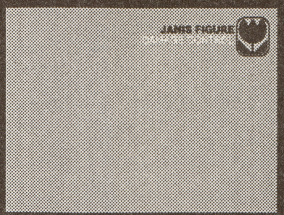
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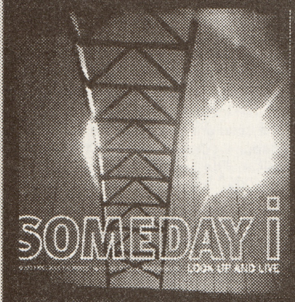
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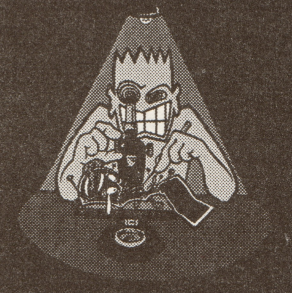

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skull. Ten tracks of sublime debauchery are what you'll find from this Metal maelstrom from Ohio ("Crumble Beneath"). Seemingly more melodic than most other bands in this genre, the tortured lead vocal help to discern this band from the ordinary and place them in the sick and twisted division ("Blissfully Damned"). Taking pages from old school bands such as Death and Obituary, these guys aim for the thrashier style rather than the downtuned sludge, and it works quite well ("Down Hell's Path"). Satan would be proud of these guys, as would the kid with the painted nails and blank stare that lives down the block from you. Is that enough for you to check these guys out?(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Speedealer "Here Comes Death" *(Palm Pictures, no address though I think it's part of Rykodisc)*. Formerly REO Speedealer, Speedealer has turned out more debauchery-induced Rock that appeals to the gritty-Rock and Roll (possibly white trash-loving) fan near you. Not my cup of tea (I hate scream-vocals 80% of the time), but I'll give 'em their props.(CD)-**Darren**

Spock's Beard "V" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St. PMB 302, Simi Valley, CA 93065)*. Progressive Rock is a very limited scope of Rock and Roll music. Shunned by the cock and jock Rock that plagues the airwaves and ruled barely accessible by most other genres of Rock, they are left to their own devices to build their own scene and by doing so, they alienate a whole host of music fans by catering to the tech heads and music nerds that support them. Spock's Beard may be the band that changes all of that, as their brand of Prog Rock is more geared towards the friendly melodies of Genesis than the incessant soloing of Dream Theater. On their 62 minute, six song offering is laden with not only intense musical interludes that display the band's tremendous chops ("The Great Nothing Parts I-XI"), but it also is hook happy and surprisingly accessible to all types of music fans ("All On A Sunday"). An unstuffy Prog Rock band that anyone can appreciate? Didn't think it was possible? Enter Spock's Beard to change your mind. If you listen to a lot of Classic Rock and don't feel as if the new Rock music has the same nuances or if you're simply a Prog Rock fan that can appreciate a good hook, be sure to check these guys out.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Sprout "Victim of the Green" *(Green Man, POB 633, Syosset, NY 11791)*. Eleven songs that range from Pop Punk to 311 inspired Funk jams. Throw in some Ska riffs and a ballad that goes for a Guns N' Roses feel. This is what Sprout means when they call their kind of music "Sprock." They even rap in some songs with a DJ. If you like your music all over the place with funny lyrics and catchy vocals, check this out.(CD)-**Chris Munity**

Squealer "The Prophecy" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St., PMB 302, Simi Valley, CA 93065)*. Another in the seemingly endless line of bands that Metal Blade has licensed from Europe. The cover artwork is just truly awful, so bad in fact, I didn't want to listen to this disc, but I forced myself in fairness to the band. *The Prophecy* consists of standard Power Metal that has thankfully managed to avoid the overabundance of flowery keyboards and high-pitched vocals. The vox are a little scratchy -- almost like Udo's voice -- just not as high. There is some well placed piano, and the drums are in time, but they don't do anything really out of the ordinary. The guitar playing is pretty good. Squealer avoids trying to do a lot of the wanky shit that has so infiltrated European Power Metal. Closer in style to early Helloween and Blind Guardian than Rhapsody and their ilk.(CD)-**Myk**

Stairwell "Pacific Standard Time" *(Take Hold, POB 19831, Birmingham, AL 35219)*. These guys sound like a better version of Promise Ring. I'm not a fan of Promise Ring, but I **did** enjoy these guys. The songs are really catchy, and the vocals are a lot more tolerable than TPR. If you're a fan of melodic, pop, Indie Rock, you can rejoice.(CD)-**Chris Munity**

The Stereo "New Tokyo Is Calling" *(Fueled By Ramen, POB 12563, Gainsville, FL 32604)*. It absolutely shocks me how The Stereo could have ripped off "Couch" by The Benjamins on their 1999 self-released EP for the self-titled track, and ultimately deny it... With that aside, Jamie Woolford is an excellent songwriter and combining his works with the legendary J Robbins on production is an phenomenal combo. But that still can't save us from the vocals! (CD)-**Darren**

Stretcher "Annomundi" *(Pitchfork, 825 College Blvd #102, Oceanside, CA 92057)*. With a band named Stretcher, you'd expect a brutal band that takes no prisoners and goes full tilt. This California quintet does all of that and more on their 12 track disc. Blending some of Death Metal's grinding riffs with touches of Metalcore and Thrash Metal ("Silence"), Stretcher keeps the beat unmercifully heavy, and creates a real sense of mayhem that the new Metal bands of today have failed to do during the course ("Hate Your Fellow Man"). This is one for the most extreme headbanger, so brace yourselves and get ready for a breakneck ride.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

SubArachnoid Space "These Things Take Time" *(Release, POB 2060, Upper Darby, PA 19082)*. For SubArachnoid Space, this may be their most musical album. There are lots of guitars and percussion, but fewer electronics than in the past. Always known for their interest in '70s Space Rock, this band has really taken the jump with this release head first into Syd Barrett era Pink Floyd. SA still has choose to go instrumental, but it is extremely loose. This is mellow and psychedelic; much of this album can remind a person of "Space Drums" by the Grateful Dead, or maybe even the soundtrack to *Easy Rider*. There are also a lot of Blues elements here as well. This record is a real work of music and love. The sounds aren't forced, and they transcend genres. A highly intelligent musical score.(CD)-**Myk**

Sunday's Best "Poised To Break" *(Polyvinyl, POB 1885, Danville, IL 61834)*. I found the vocals on the verse of the first song sounding exactly like "Everything She Does Is Magic," by the Police, almost so much that I thought it was a cover of it, but it wasn't. Dual vocals (one heavy and one smooth) set this one apart from other bands of this genre. I would recommend this to fans of Promise Ring and Get Up Kids.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Superpimp "Dig" *(www.superpimp.com)*. Superpimp is a hard rockin' quartet from Upstate New York that mixes the attitude of late '80's Hard Rock a la Saigon Kick ("Waterproof") with some funky licks mixed in ("Finger") to create an ass shaking and head banging experience. Not as funky as RHCP, yet not as heavy as Metallica, these guys carve a pretty exclusive niche for themselves on their 10 track CD ("Teeth," "Get Ya Freak On"). These guys basically have got a good groove going on that is enhanced with a solid rhythm section that allows the kick ass vocals and fancy guitar work to work you over. If you like Hard Rock with an edge like Van Halen and Extreme, then these guys would be right up your alley. Get pimped today!(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Supershine *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St. PMB 302, Simi Valley, CA 93065)*. A Metal supergroup of sorts, Supershine is the side project of King's X bassman Doug Pinnick and Trouble's axeman Bruce Franklin. Assisted by members of each guy's respective band, this collective pounds out 12 tracks of solid Rock and Roll that accentuates each man's strengths and in turn, creates a Hard Rock album that's bound to please anyone who considers themselves a Rock fan. Franklin's down and dirty guitar work meshes well with Pinnick's trademark melodic vocals ("I Can't Help You"), as it puts a spin on each man's previous work and answers the question "what if...." with a resounding "this is how it is!" Kind of Sabbath-y and retro, with a ethereal '70s Rock vibe ("Automatic," "Candy Andy Jane"), Supershine puts the power of the riff Rock firmly to the test with stellar results. If you're curious, or a big fan of either one's band, then Supershine is a must have disc.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Sybarite "Music For A Film" *(Temporary Residence Ltd, POB 22910, Baltimore, MD 21203-4910)*. Strange noisescapes with beats.. Perfect film music, as the title would suggest, featuring an ex-Silver Apples member.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Tantrum of the Muse "Modern Musick 2000!" *(Take Hold, POB 19831, Birmingham, AL 35219)*. This Blueball, PA based trio caught me off guard with their downright sonic blend of atmospheric yet muscular Indie Rock. Songs like "Chicks With Guns" and "Went To Hell" find the band soaring through an orgy of chunky chords, slithering basslines and slow, moody build up parts. Vocals are both sung and screamed. This singer in this band can really sing! Elements of Shudder To Think, Tool and Sunny Day exist in the mix. In order to add more ambiance, the Tantrum chaps have also incorporated a whole host of spoken word samples from movies and television which seem to mock Christianity. I'm sure Billy Graham would be proud. Very original and ballsy.(CD)-**Alex**

Taproot "Gift" *(Velvet Hammer/Atlantic, 1290 Avenue of The Americas, New York, NY 10104)*. Once in a while, a band deserves the hype and praise it receives (although that situation is becoming scarcer by the day). Enter Taproot, one of the few whose debut album hits substantially harder than the standard "3 deep single" album from generic Aggro Rock band of the month. This Detroit quartet, who were embroiled in a much publicized bidding war with head wigga in charge Fred Durst among others, come out swinging an overflowing bag of tricks on their 12 song gem. From their top notch use of dynamics a la Deftones ("Mirror's Reflection") to their staccato guitar work a la Korn ("Smile") to their soulful vocal interludes in between a crunching chorus akin to Incubus ("Believed"), Taproot may be cut from the same cloth that has spawned these monster bands.

However, these early 20-somethings show much more than their primary colors obvious to everyone. Top notch songwriting leads the charge here folks, as every scream and whisper is perfectly placed and is maximized for precise impact ("Again & Again"). And they also have a firm grasp on how to write emotionally charged Jock Rock, kind of like if Creed met Limp Bizkit (damn, wouldn't that be interesting, "I"). Taproot's latest is exactly what its title suggests, and thankfully it keeps giving and giving spin after spin. If you like Korn and love Staind, you'll really dig these guys.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Toshack Highway "Toshack Highway" *(Catapult, 327 Summer St. Studio 4, Boston MA 02210)*. If you're a modern-day art-rocker, this disc is totally up your alley. No, I'm not referring to "Art Rock" a la Yes and King Crimson, but rather the '90's critical-favorites of Radiohead and Sonic Youth. The vocals are heavily sedated (apparently much like the guys in the group) a la Thurston Moore, as the songs see tremendous buildups along the lines of The Dandy Warhols. Despite Toshack Highway being partial to instrumentals, the aforementioned-Radiohead -- under the production of Nigel Godrich -- sees more than the occasional nod in the big sound that the group achieves. Through use of many keyboards and acoustic guitars, delay and reverb are the constant of most of the songs, not distortion, as many of them seem to hold infinite dimensions of sound. All in all, this is a brilliant record though little is memorable of the individual tracks -- maybe you'll be hearing this over the Irving Plaza PA sometime soon...(CD)-**Darren**

Tristan Psionic "Mind the Gap" *(Sonic Unyon, POB 57347, Jackson Station Hamilton Ontario, L8P 4X2 Canada)*. Indie Rock served hot and fresh out of Canada? The country known for its love of hockey and pro wrestling? Yup, in the form of Tristan Psionic, a quartet from Ontario that after a near four year absence, have returned armed with an arsenal of guitar driven thinking man's rock that's a little bit emo and a whole lot of indie ("The Move Is Set," "Launch"). From the 8 minute opener "Promise," TP catches your ear with their subtle nuances, not by bludgeoning the ears. Jangly and catchy ("Sunshinin'") at times, while chugging and full of flow at others ("Camp Morningstar"), these Canadians have got their act down pact. If you're looking for some lo-fi Rock that's emotional and powerful but not overpowering, then check this release out. A fine reintroduction after a four year absence.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Two Hit Creeper "The Stepchildren's Twisted Circus Magic" *(POB 8846, Fountain Valley, CA 92728)*. This two man Industrial attack takes the Korn/Manson angst and plays it to the bone on their five song sampler CD. Two Hit Creeper is their name, and the strange twist on this outfit is their instrumentation. Consisting of an accordion and a guitar, THC's sound is eerie and unique ("Inside"), yet they tread the same conceptual road followed by oh so many bands today, that of the wayward child. Dark and dirge-y, THC is best listened to with the lights out and your conscience clear. Good ideas shine through some decent execution this time around. Maybe the influx of a live band behind these two creative creepers would benefit them next time around.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

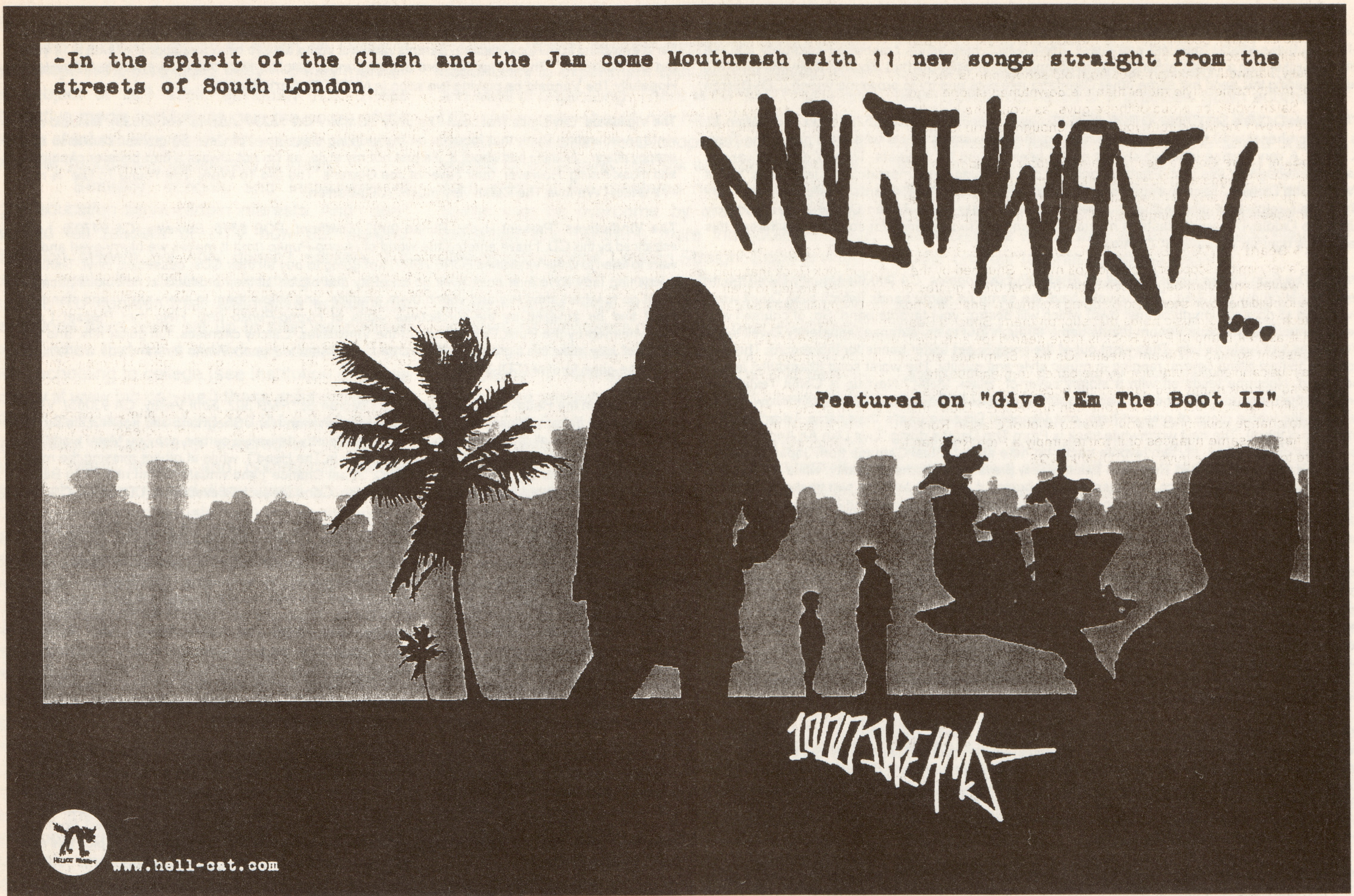
Uncle Tiki "Psycho Voodoo Rock and Roll" *(www.surfto/uncletiki)*. Uncle Tiki is a very fun trio from California that blends a Punk Rock attitude with some '80s Metal flare under a bluesy guise. This is what Motley Crue may sound like if Brain Setzer joined them ("Nothin' Better"). Their six song sampler is something to pop a few beers open to and party all night to. From the stellar dirty boogie bass and drum combo to the catchy melodies that stick in your head, these guys are underproduced and many times overclassed, but their attitude is unsurpassed ("The Devil's Son"). For a good time, look this band up.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

Undying "The Whispered Lies of Angels" *(Good Life, POB 114-8500, Kortrijk, Belgium)*. Relentlessly heavy, Undying is a brutal Metal band that takes no prisoners on their latest 10 track release. Mixing classic Metal with screaming metalcore ("Fallen Grace"), this bruising outfit loads pounding rhythms and stacks upon stacks of guitars into their mix of semi-religious speak to the unsuspecting listener. Bedlam is sure to ensue soon after one listen of this ultra heavy offering ("The Coming Dark Age," "A Desert In The Heart"). Perhaps even a conversion to the good side is in the cards? Perhaps, because Undying's music is undeniably as heavy, if not heavier, than their message.(CD)-**MikeSOS**

V/A "A Plea For Peace" *(Asian Man, POB 35585, Monte Soreno, CA 95030)*. A benefit comp for the Plea For Peace foundation, which is a non-profit organization that was established to spread the ideas of peace and unity. Twenty-nine bands get together for a good cause. Here they be: Chris Murray, Softball, Honor System, Blue Meanies, Polysics, Link 80, The Chinkees, Lawrence Arms, Alkaline Trio, Smoking Popes, Astropop3, Trust Foundation, King Apparatus, MU330, Pushover, Ee, Mike Park, Potshot, Space Giants, Big D & the Kids Table, Skankin' Pickle, Slow Gherkin, Dan Potthast, The Gamits, The Fairlanes, Apocalypse Hoboken, Homeless Wonders, Decay, and Angelo Moore from Fishbone. I got to hear a lot of bands that I haven't heard before that I dug, like The Chinkees and Alkaline Trio. Peace out.(CD)-**Chris Munity**

V/A "Bi-Focal Media: Kampai Compilation" *(Bi-Focal, POB 50106, Raleigh, NC 27650-0106)*. A compilation of bands from North Carolina and other southern states. A pretty good representation of the new "Emo" thing. Favorite bands here are: Secret Life of Machines, Monochrome, The White Octave, Strike Anywhere, and Kids with Kites. Some of the bands were not that good (I didn't list them); I think it was more for recording reasons, though one band was really bad. There is no real theme here. Which disappoints me, I think compilations should have some sort of theme going on. If you are looking for new music to get into, then you should get this.(CD)-**Jack**

V/A "Covered In Nails: A Tribute to Nine Inch Nails" *(Cleopatra, PMB 251, 13428 Maxella Ave, Marina*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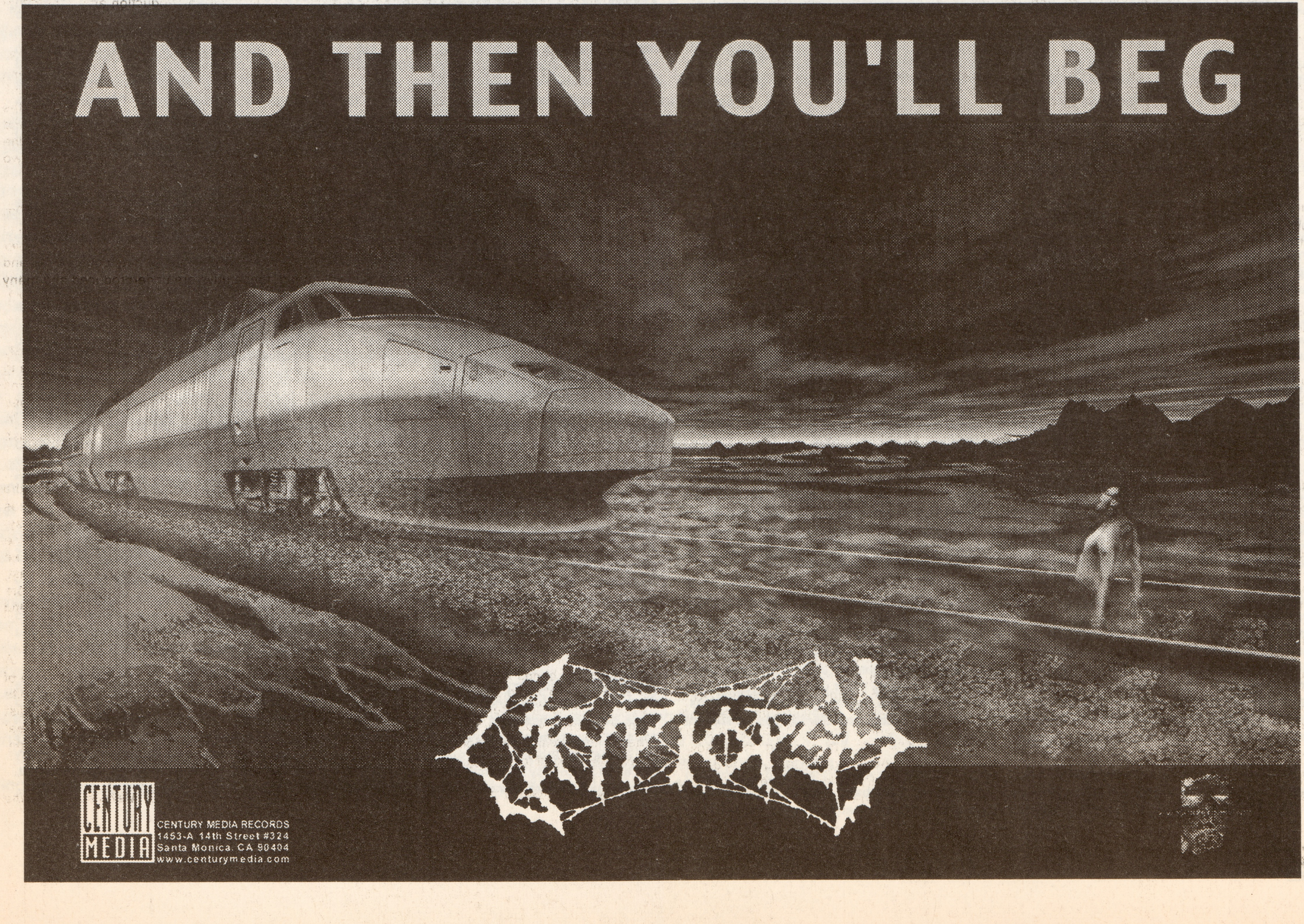
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Del Rey. CA 90292). Can this label do **anything** right? All they release is shitty, unbalanced tribute albums, those stupid "greatest and latest" deals which help artists crash their credibility into the ground quicker than a... okay, nothing witty to compare to, and flat-out bad albums. If anyone from the label is reading this, send me some other Cleopatra releases and try to prove me wrong.(CD)**-Darren**

V/A "Exxxile On Main St." *(Triple X. POB 862529. Los Angeles. CA 90086-2529). Exxxile On Main St.* is a comprehensive 19 track collection which outlines the various artists who are a part of the Triple X roster. A very diverse label which has nearly been around for 15 years, Triple X displays various flavorings throughout this disc. Plenty of goodies can be found here, most notably Jeff Dahl's "Lisa's World," The Dickies "Toxic Avenger" and The Exploited's "Beat The Bastards." Nevermind the Punk Rock, this retrospect also includes Jane's Addiction, Inger Lorre, Urban Dance Squad and holy shit....Bo Diddley!? If you're taste in music varies and you're searching for something different, this release is right up your alley.(CD)**-Alex**

V/A "In The Sign Of The Horns" *(Dwell. POB 39439. Los Angeles. CA 90039)*. Usually Dwell tribute records get on my bad side. They usually have the same no name bands (which even Dwell won't even sign to do a full-length of their own) which will destroy your favorite band. So, of course I was hesitant when the inevitable Venom tribute came through. But to my surprise, apparently Dwell takes Venom as seriously as I do. They went out of their way to get better bands for this record. The disc contains 15 hard hitting covers, ranging in music style and quality. The worst song (thankfully) is only not good. Nocturne leads off with a sloppy cover of "Black Metal." Next up is Coffin Texts, with probably the most true cover on the disc. Blood Storm does an adequate job next, but following that is by far the worse piece of crap on here, one Venereal Disease (that's their name, I don't need to make fun of them). The next worthwhile track is From The Depths doing "Live Like An Angel," which is very Bathory sounding. My two favorite tracks on here are by Ritual Carnage from Japan and Mork Gryning doing "Leave Me In Hell." MG has this very prevalent Motorhead quality, while RC has this '80's Black Thrash thing going on. This disc is worth buying if just to hear these two tracks. Anal Blast, Acheron (who does a pretty killer version of "Countess Bathory"), Noctuary, and Morpheus Descends close out this disc. This is good fun, and pretty easy on the ears for once. It's no substitute for the original, but it accomplishes what it set out to do.(CD)**-Myk**

V/A "King Diamond Tribute" *(Necropolis, POB 14815. Fremont, CA 94539)*. All hail the mighty King Diamond, as a plethora of the heaviest signed and unknown bands pay tribute to one of the forefathers of Black Metal. On this 11 track compilation, a good spectrum of Diamond's work is featured, and the performances aren't half as bad as you may expect. Standouts include In Aeternus' version of "Abigail" and Exhumed tongue in cheek rendition of "No Presents For Christmas," all in the same grand splendor in which the King has reveled in for nearly two decades. If you're a Diamond-head, definitely pick this CD up and see how the new breed of Metal pay homage to a well deserved legend.(CD)**-MikeSOS**

V/A "Metroschifter: Encapsulated" *(Doghouse. POB 8946. Toledo. OH 43623)*. Here's an interesting concept: write and album and give it to other bands to record. That's what Scott Richter and Metroschifter did. And boy do they know some bands! Check this *Who's Who* of Emo/Indie: The Get Up Kids, Burning Airlines, The Promise Ring, The Enkindels, Rye Coalition, Refused, Joan of Arc, Elliot, and Ink and Dagger. Other bands include, Cooler, MT Rhoades nd His Lonesome Woods Band, Music Group, and Kyle Crabtree & Jason. I dug the GUK track and the surprisingly acoustic, Refused track. Weird, but worthy.(CD)**-Chris Munity**

V/A "New Sounds New York" *(New Sounds New York, 286 East 2nd St. #4D. New York. NY 10009)*. This is a great comp, featuring bands from New York (hence the name) such as Kill Van Kull (who I think are a great band), Chupa Cabra, FF, Slim, Elvis 77 and a few others. Pick this up.(CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

V/A "Punch Drunk II" *(TKO. 4104 24th St. #103. San Francisco. CA 94114)*. Twenty-five bands, 66 minutes (ha) -- this is wonderful. You get your old-school Punk, you get some Country Punk (props to Filthy Thieving Bastards on "Hopeless Vows"), you get everything in-between as all things Rock and Roll can be found on *Punch Drunk II*..(CD)**-Darren**

V/A "Rock N Roll Au Go Go" *(Devil Doll, POB 30727, Long Beach. CA 90803)*. Nothing new here, but who cares? Two songs each by the Candy Snatchers, Rocket City Riot, Three Years Down and Pizzle. So if you like dirty Rock n' Roll, pick this up.(CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

V/A "Scene Report" *(Triple Crown. 331 West 57th St., PMB 472. New York. NY 10019)*. One of the best samplers representing the current Hardcore scene. Rich had some trouble with me reviewing this because Two Man is on it. They are, and it's probably the best recording they have to date. But that's all I need to say about them. It holds no bearing on the rest of the bands. There are 21 bands on this comp, ranging from amazing, to mediocre, to downright awful. I'll leave the awful bands alone so not to hurt any feelings. But there are some songs that really stuck out for me. Death Threat was a true ass kicker, a nice way to start off a disc (it's the second track, but the real start of everything); Ringworm, who I already knew I loved, puts in one of their heaviest songs to date. The Hoods show up with a song that is very AF sounding. Irate makes one hell of an appearance after a less than stellar first EP (I'm pretty sure it's the same band), One 4 One kicks a lot of ass, like they always do live. Billyclub rounds out the end of the disc with some nasty Street Punk-esque modern Hardcore. But, the be all end all on this disc is a band called Disciple. It's fucking heavy; the vocals are growls, and the guitar riffs in the middle of the song make you want to rip your neighbors head off. All in all, this is a great disc, and there is a lot of growth in the Metalcore sound. The difference between the bands is very clear, a problem they couldn't seem to solve in the past.(CD)**-Myk**

V/A "Sounds For The Geographically Challenged" *(Temporary Residence Ltd, POB 22910, Baltimore, MD 21203-4910)*. Fifteen songs by bands that have members that live in different cities/states. Twelve of the tracks are previously unreleased. TRL label (and they are not affiliated wit the MTV show) has released some great discs in the indie genre, and this is no exception (though there are a couple of clinkers on this comp). There are some standout tunes on here by Retsin, Liquorice, Sonora Pine, Halifax Pier, The For Carnation and a bunch more. This is good stuff.(CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

V/A Damad/Meatjack *(At A Loss. POB 3597, Annapolis. MD 21403)*. A powerful split indeed. Damad returns with two songs, while the up and coming Meatjack belt out three tracks. Damad once again prove that it isn't always bad to have a female vocalist, especially when the one you have sounds like she could be in Today Is The Day. Meatjack is a more despondent, almost Hammerhead like band. Distorted, screeching vocals over power, slow chords. The drum's precise and slow, like a quiet Neurosis breakdown. Pure power from both these bands. Damad play a more constant squatter type Metal Punk. Flaming vocals, with atmospheric sounding guitars, and pounding bass heavy drums. Even the cymbals sound heavy in this recording. It's just plain brutal, and Damad are consistent because I haven't heard a bad thing from them yet.(CD)**-Myk**

The Vandals "Look What I Almost Stepped In..." *(Nitro. 701 Warner Ave. F PMB 736, Huntington Beach, CA 92647)*. More of what you expect from your favorite "fun" Punk band. This CD sounds pretty well-polished. I never heard the *Hitler Bad, Vandals Good* disc, so I can't really compare the two. The bio says this album sounds similar. You really can't go wrong with the Vandals in my book. They poke fun at everything from Rock stardom, parents, and not being able to have a relationship with a 14 year old in "Fourteen." The songs on here are a lot more catchier than those on *Live Fast, Diarrhea*. Hopefully The Vandals be playing live soon in NYC.(CD)**-Chris Munity**

The Vigilantes "City Lights That Lead The Way" *(GMM, POB 15234, Atlanta, GA 30333)*. Melodic and vintage-sounding Punk that focuses on the working class point of view. Sing-shout choruses and snappy riffage... Nothing bad about it, it's just not my style, as I'm not always a firm believer of politics and music mixing. However, their cover of Joe Glazer's "Too Old To Work, Too Young To Die" is rad. File under "We love The Clash very much."(CD)**-Darren**

The Vindictives "Present Hypno-Punko (tm)" *(Coldfront, POB 8345, Berkeley, CA 94707)*. I am entranced by this CD. I have entered the world of *Hypno-Punko (tm)*! It makes we blurry-eyed and all want to listen to is the Vindictives FOREVER! I am going to buy all their CDs, cassettes, vinyl, T-shirts, everything they have ever sold. I will go on eBay and bid on all their products at ridiculous prices. I must go to where they live and watch them practice, and follow them to every show, and stand up front and be amazed by the Vindictives world of *Hypno-Punko (tm)*. Help me! Please! I am overwhelmed by the Punk Pop sounds of the Vindictives. Catchy choruses, fun guitar riffs, and the vocals of Joey make this a great CD. Be warned: one listen to *Hypno-Punko (tm)* and you will fall into it and be gone forever.(CD)**-Jack**

Virus 7 "Sick In the Head" *(Metal Blade. 2828 Cochran St., PMB 302, Simi Valley, CA 93065)*. Virus 7 features the guitar virtuosity of King Diamond's main man Hank Shermann and not much else, as this 12 track disc, for all of its adventurous merits, is a pretty derivative carbon copy nu Metal warbling. Sounding like a third rate Stuck Mojo at times ("Sick In The Head"), while at others missing the mark completely with dumb ass, cheesy lyrics ("TUC," "Last Chance") and virtually stolen riffs ("You Better Believe"), Virus 7 should've stayed in the chem lab. Good ideas, bad execution.(CD)**-MikeSOS**

Voi Vod "Lives" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St, PMB 208, Simi Valley, CA 93065)*. This live album was recorded in 1986 at two different locations, including a CBGB I caught that year. In actuality, this record came out somewhere between six month and a year earlier in Canada. To keep people interested in the US release, Metal Blade got two bonus tracks recorded in 1989. The sound quality on this disc is unbelievable. It's almost hard to believe this was recorded anywhere but a studio. The guitar riffs are right up in your face, as are the vocals. The drums are solidly in the mix, but have this sort of haunting distance from the rest of the music, giving them a weird echo-reverb sound. The track listing is a perfect mix of old songs and new songs. Eric, the current vocalist does a smashing job replacing the departed Snake on such classics as "Tribal Convictions." Not to mention they really show their roots with a cover of "In League With Satan," in the early days Voi Vod always played Venom and Mercyful Fate covers. This is just what all the Voi Vod fans needed to hold them over till the next masterpiece, which is being recorded as I write this.(CD)**-Myk**

Voi Vod "Lives" *(Metal Blade, 2828 Cochran St. PMB 302. Simi Valley. CA 93065)*. Voi Vod is arguably one of the premiere underground Metal bands of all time, and this 13 track live offering shows their diverse catalog of music, as well as showcases their astute performances through the years. Compiled from two shows, one from legendary NYC club CBGB's and from Holland's annual Dynamo open air fest, this CD is chock full of the space-aged Metal that you'd expect from the Canadian trio. If you're a fan of this groundbreaking avant garde Metal clan, definitely pick this one up.(CD)**-MikeSOS**

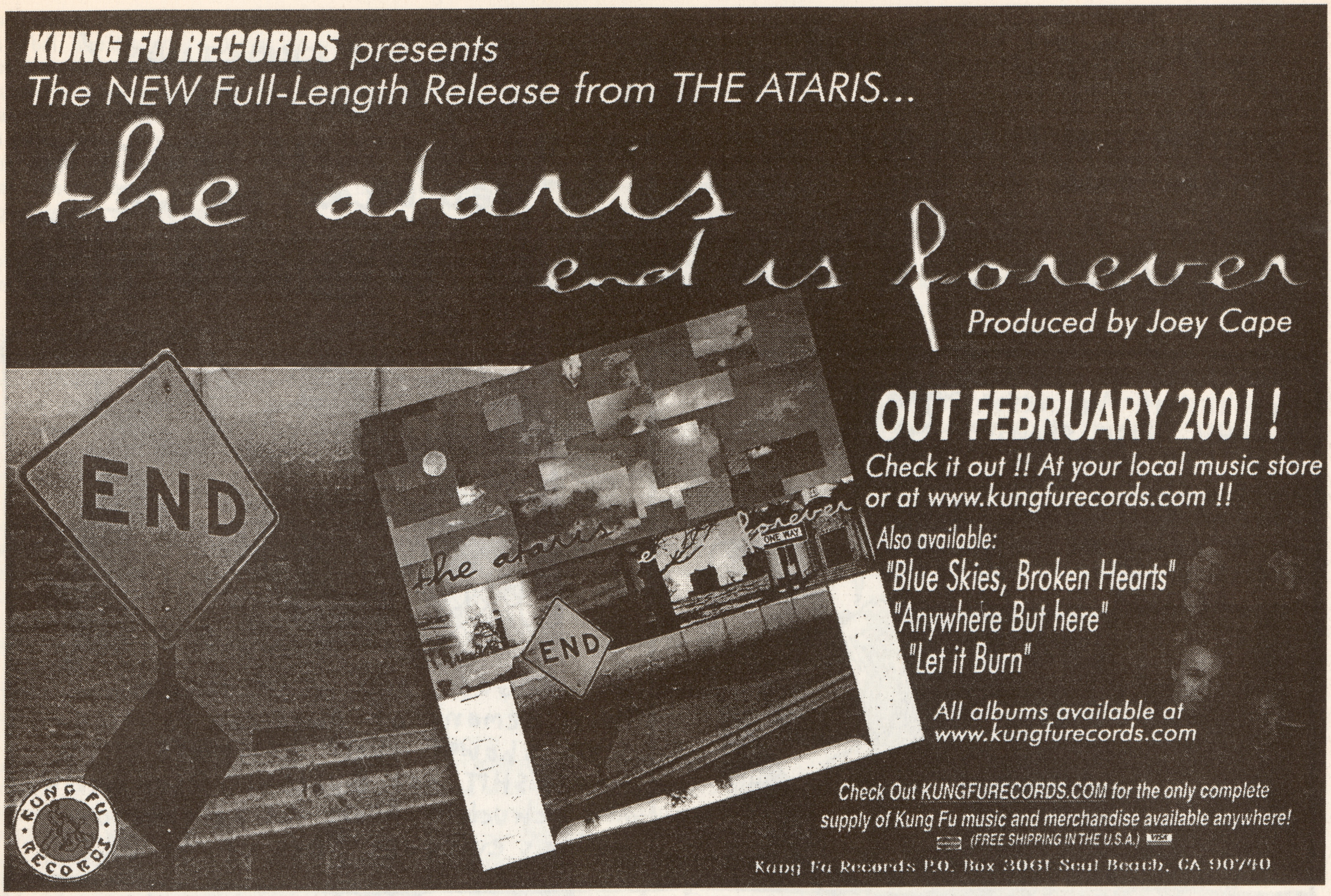
Voodoo Glow Skulls "Symbolic" *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. First of all, the promo that I got with this album says that VGS..."stand alone as a ferocious testament to individuality and the raw, raging power of Rock and Roll." Serious. Ahh fuck, this album is just plain not good. The song structure is awful. Boring, sub-mediocre, Punk (if you could call it that) songs with horns terribly placed throughout. And don't even get me started on this guy's voice. Have you heard this guy's voice? It makes me want to cram fuckin' Q-tips in my ears. Ya can't even hear what he says...it's like he's mumbling or something. When you read the lyrics along with the music, this is what you get, "Mock us, mock us, if you can...'Cause we don't play like other bands." And you thought Bukowski was original!! There are some songs in Spanish which I'm usually a sucker for. I must add though, that they've been around for 12 years so, they must be doing something right, so fuck me, what do I know?(CD)**-Corporate Whore**

WASP "The Best Of The Best" *(Snapper, 1976 East High St., Suite 101, Pottstown, PA 19464)*. There was a good time period where the name WASP was a dirty word. It was dirty because they just put out some utter crap while Blackie Lawless and whoever played the instruments were considered the band. WASP has ALWAYS been a dirty word when it comes to those censorship talks, especially now that we have Tipper AND Joe Lieberman trying to get into office. Well, just in time for that horrendous decision to be made comes a collection of nastiness to remind the masses of why Blackie and company were so hated. This disc is full of gems, mostly culled from their first three albums, a cover of "Saturday's Alright For Fighting," a new track, and of course "Animal: Fuck Like A Beast." This is the quintessential collection from these '80's bad boys for those of you who haven't replaced your old LPs yet; it's also a must for all you longtime completists. Chock full o' goodness for all you baddies.(CD)**-Myk**

The Weakerthans "Left And Leaving" *(Sub City, POB 7493, Van Nuys, CA 91409-7495)*. The first song is misleading; at first this Rex/Jets To Brazil (at mellow moments) sounding band was very down beat, but then the second track comes in at a tempo four times the speed of the first song (nothing to heavy here...). With one of the members of this band formerly of Propagandhi (bassist), The Weakerthans sound is actually quite similar to Jets, and I think this would totally appeal to fans of the aforementioned bands.(CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

Wesley Willis "Rush Hour" *(Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092)*. Rock over London! Rock on Chicago! Pontiac...We Build Excitement! That's right, Wesley returns giving the same old err...spoken word...over that jazzy keyboard beat. Songs include: "Shit and Fuck," "I Whipped Batman's Ass," and "STP Conked Out My Engine." Want to know how good it is? My sister's preppy boyfriend walked in and said "You can't possibly like this. It sounds like someone left it in the sun too long." This album is flat out fucking hilarious. Every song ends on some bullshit ad slogan, Kraft Macaroni, Pepsi, and Folger's are all covered. If you don't find this shit ingenious, you have problems. Jello does it again, a must own!(CD)**-Corporate Whore**

White Skull "Public Glory, Secret Agony" *(Nuclear Blast, POB 43618, Philadelphia, PA 19106)*. White Skull is an Italian Metal band with female lead vocals that soar like an eagle. The music's not half bad either, despite the nostalgic '80's Metal vibe ("The Field Of Peace"). White Skull pulls off 11 tracks of melodic power Metal suitable for the Coliseum. Multi-layered guitar work leads the charge ("Valley Of The Sun") as this five piece outfit puts together a concept album based on Roman ancient history that's not as cheesy as it may sound. Check it out, if not from being curious from the last sentence, then at least to here some top notch female Metal vocalizations. Kiss me deadly!(CD)**-MikeSOS**



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SPORT'S PAGE... JUST IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS! HERE YA GO, ROCK-N-ROLLERS...

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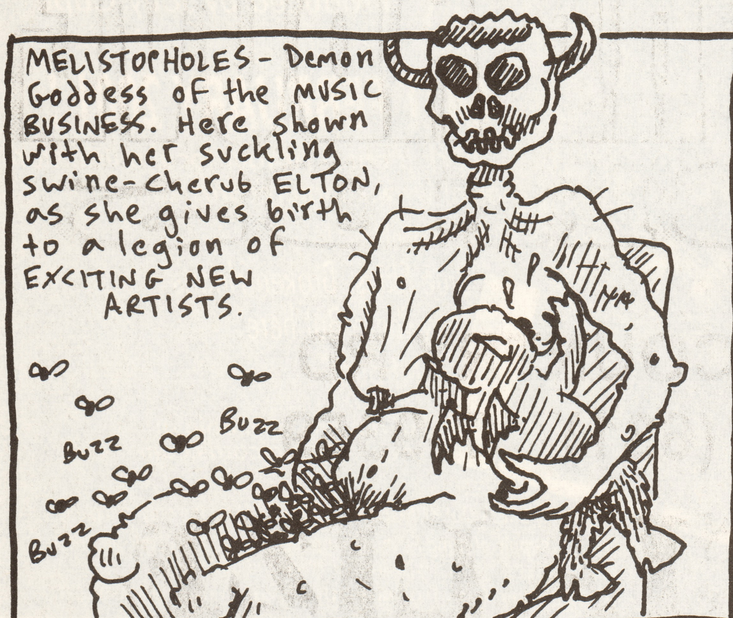
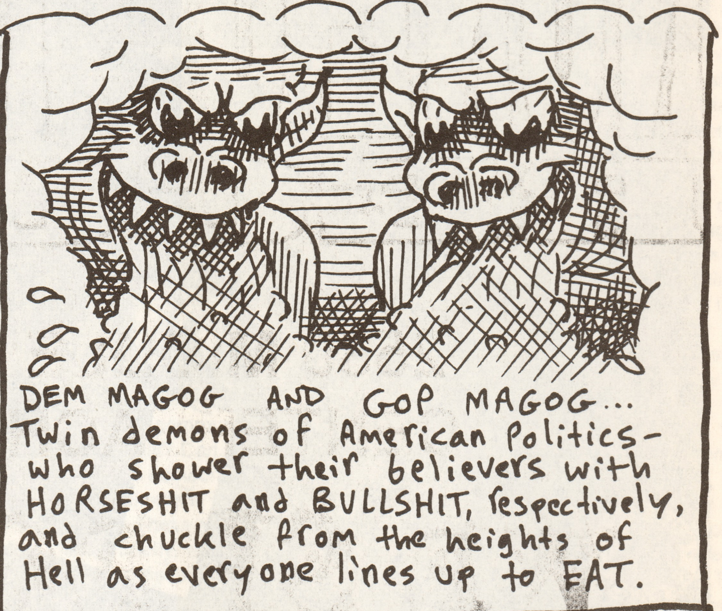
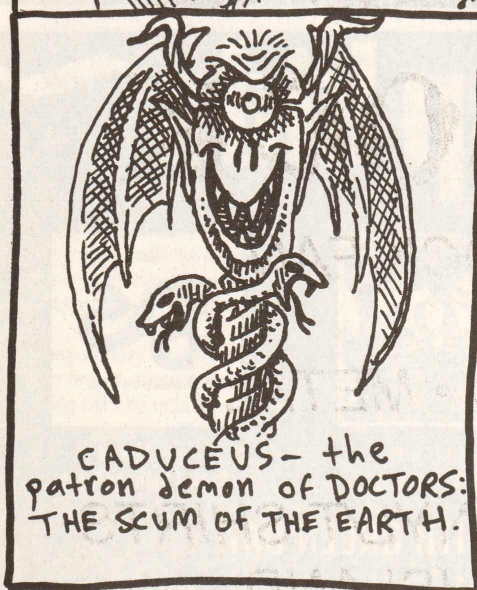
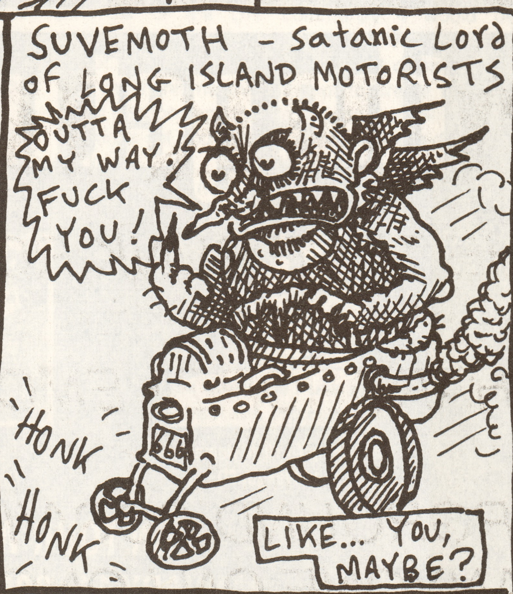
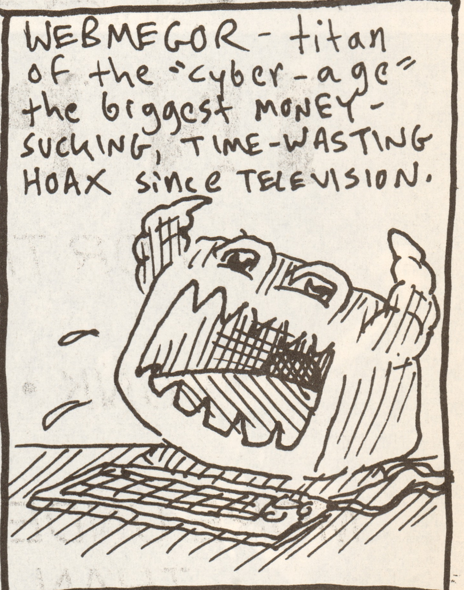
PATRON DEMONS


MELISTOPHOLES - Demon Goddess of the MUSIC BUSINESS. Here shown with her suckling swine-cherub ELTON, as she gives birth to a legion of EXCITING NEW ARTISTS.


DEM MAGOG AND GOP MAGOG... Twin demons of American Politics- who shower their believers with HORSESHIT and BULLSHIT, respectively, and chuckle from the heights of Hell as everyone lines up to EAT.


CADUCEUS- the patron demon of DOCTORS: THE SCUM OF THE EARTH.


SUVEMOTH - Satanic Lord of LONG ISLAND MOTORISTS
OUTTA MY WAY. FUCK YOU!
HONK
HONK
666
LIKE... YOU, MAYBE?


WEBMEGOR - titan of the "cyber-age" the biggest MONEY-SUCKING, TIME-WASTING HOAX since TELEVISION.

SO, you wonder... just what does this asshole LIKE, anyway? Well, I like THE DEATH PENALTY, CIGARETTES, and BLOWJOBS. Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, Rockin' Ramadan, & a Very very Dope Kwaanzaa to one and all. & Don't buy my new c.d. on Kill Rock Stars- "MAGIC BEANS"... you're too fuckin' STUPID to appreciate it. © SPORT 2000

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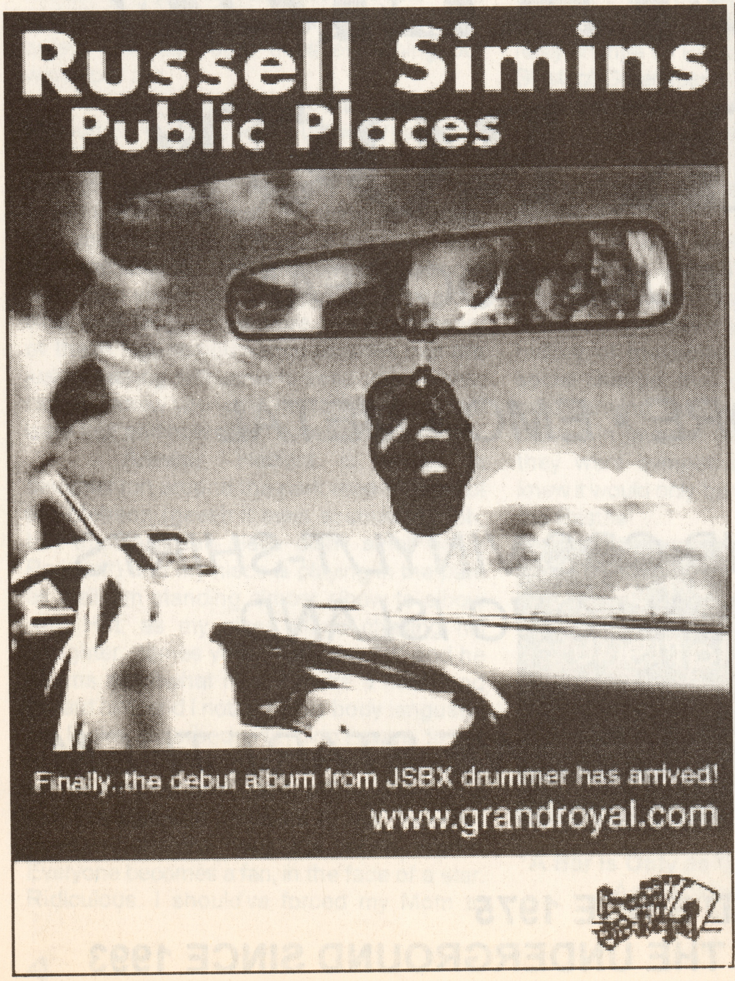
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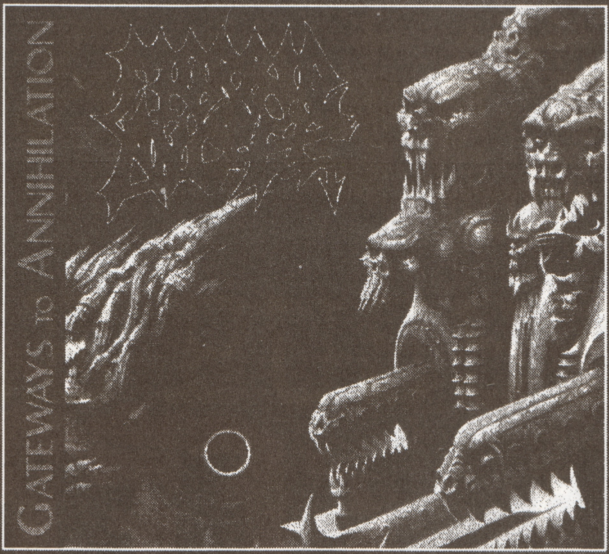

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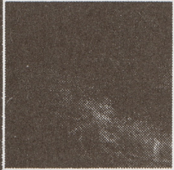
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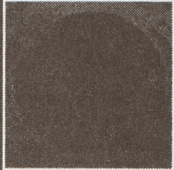
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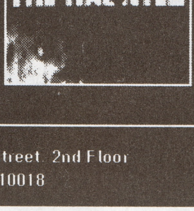

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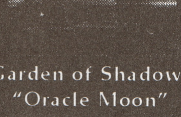
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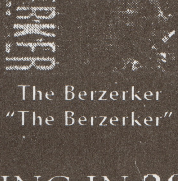

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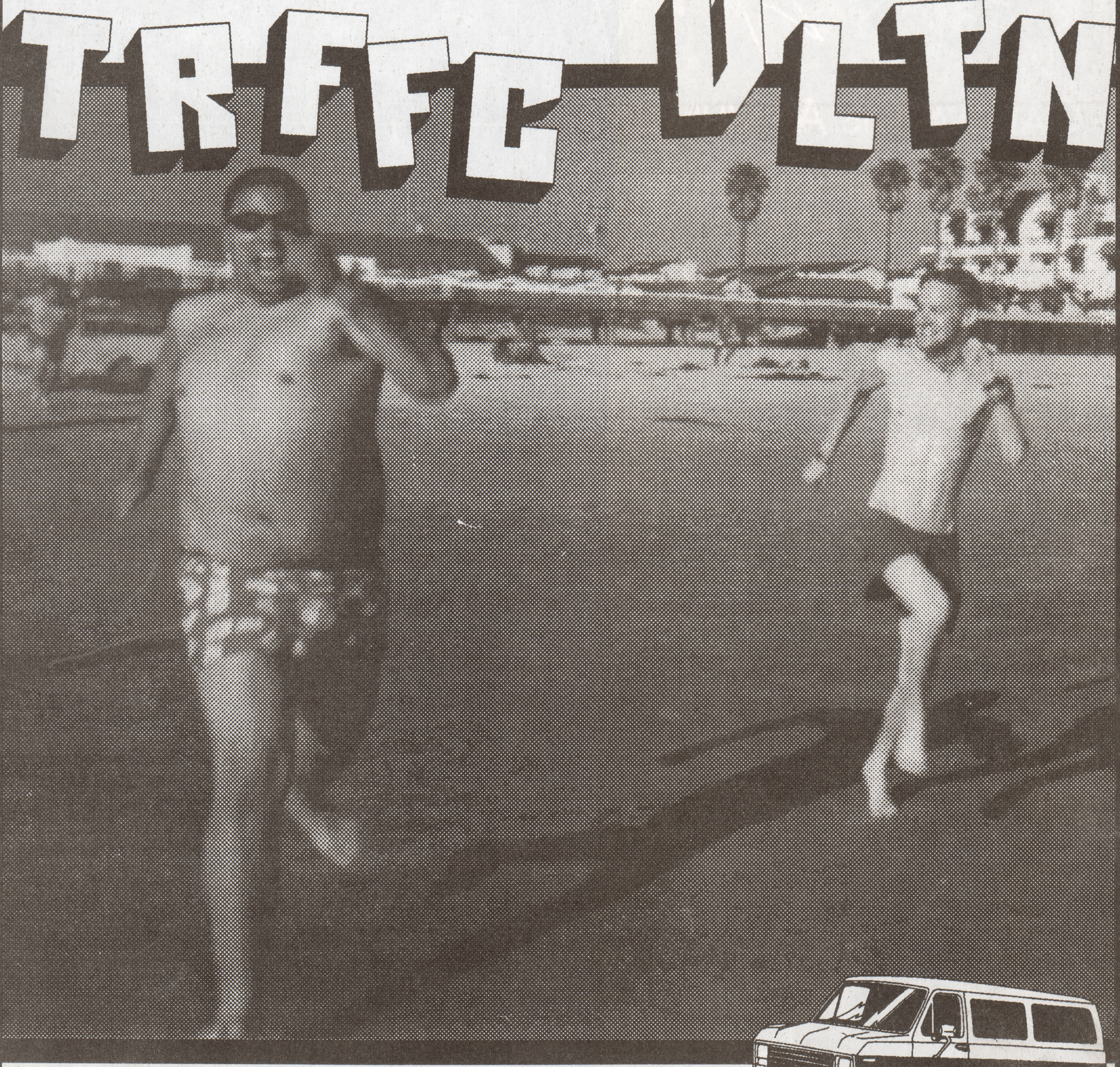

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